

INSIDE SOCCER

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BENNETT SAVES POWER

The opening weekend of NSL 99/2000 provided our new clubs with some sobering reality. In Parramatta a heavy rainstorm reduced the attendance of the first ever Parramatta Power match to just 8,021. And on the park the visitors Marconi also threatened to rain on Parra's parade, until Peter Bennett made himself an instant hero. He scored Power's historic first goal, to level at 1-1, with literally seconds left. And what a goal! A screaming volley that showed you can't write off Power this year, no matter how dark the clouds may be.

Meanwhile, across the Tasman Carlton issued a clear warning with a thoroughly professional 0-3 demolition of NSL newcomers, Football Kingz. The Kiwi side had no answers as Carlton's experienced 'Brit Pack' and skilful Brazilian Moreira tore them apart. Could this be Carlton's year? More NSL coverage, analysis and news inside your quality weekly devoted to Australian Soccer...



PLUS: DAVID CLARKSON, GREG BLAKE, AUSSIES ABROAD AND TWO MATILDAS SIGN LUCRATIVE US DEAL

S-NEWS

INSIDE SOC-
CER'S AUSTRALIAN
NEWS AND GOSS

OH, WE HAVE TO ENROL DO WE.

Courtesy of Studs Up fanzine's KC, according to the FIFA website: 'As at October 1, 1999 103 nations had enrolled for the 2002 qualifying process. Australia was not among them. Hmmm.

EXODUS FROM STRIKERS

Looking at a picture of the Brisbane Strikers 12 months ago, and of the 20 players, 15 have left. That is some turnover. Speaking of which, reports from the Courier Mail in Brisbane suggesting striker Wayne Knipe had not signed are true. There are plans afoot for 'Knipey', and they certainly don't include Brisbane. We will keep you informed as to what his movements are soon.

ARE YOU BEING SERVED?

Big Mark Rudan is an unwelcome sight for any striker playing Spirit. But did you know that he used to be a waiter? Or that Michael Cunico once worked at General Pants? These nuggets come from Spirit's media kit handed out last week. And as for the players' four favourite dinner guests the usual names kept cropping up: Demi Moore, Cindy Crawford etc. But wait, Matt Langdon wanted three supermodels and David Ginola! No disrespect to little Langers, but who do you think the supermodels will want to spend time with?? And did you know that young Simon Catanzaro's nickname is 'The Freak' and Clayton Zane's fav band is the Whitlams (wonder what Remo and Kerry think?) and a couple of other (unnamed) players wanted as din-

ner guests Jesus, Newman from Seinfeld and Mum and Dad! And we thought Robbie Slater was a nutter.

INDIGENOUS INDOOR SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIPS

There will be a National Indigenous Peoples' Indoor Soccer Championships being held next weekend (ie. 9-10 October) in Sydney. Male and female teams are travelling from Alice Springs, Armidale, Blackbutt (Qld), Brisbane, Jervis Bay, Narooma and Sydney to participate in the championships which will also be used to select Indigenous Australian male and female teams to participate in a 4-nations tournament in January 2000 (including Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Vanuatu). The Championships will be opened by Evonne Cawley at 9.30am on Saturday 9 October at the Hawkesbury Indoor Centre, Windsor.

TYPICAL FITZSIMMONS

In case you haven't read his column, Rugby Union's eloquent bovver boy, SMH writer Peter Fitzsimmons, has quoted a US survey saying that heading a soccer ball may cause some brain problems over time. Of course youngsters are given deflated balls to head so the technique is right and any problems are headed (sorry!) off early in their career. The consistently disparaging-to-soccer Fitzsimmons failed to mention that running at each other at top speed and smashing into him, head stomping and

eye gouging (i.e. Rugby) has, as we all know, no deleterious effects, does it?

GIVE ME AN EDDIE K CUT

It's official. You can now ask for an Eddie Krncevic cut! Yes, that's right, I.S. was in for a trim and asked, somewhat facetiously, for "an Eddie Krncevic". The hairdresser just smiled and said: "No worries". Turned out, the guy with the scissors was a Marconi fan.

TOLD YOU SO

Don't you hate a told-you-so? Having said that we did say some time ago that Ian Rush was coming out for two guest games at Sydney O-lym-pic. Go Rushy.

COSMOS COACHING CAMPS

Kids in Canberra, read this. This week at Mawson Oval, Mawson the mighty Canberra Cosmos will hold junior coaching clinics for 8-13 year-olds. It starts tomorrow (Wed) so call the office and speak to Andrew on 6281 7981. It runs for three days between 9-12 and everyone gets a soccer ball, posters and stickers plus all the Cosmos players will be there. Cost is only \$100 for the three days.

MY BLUE HEAVEN

Some time ago we interviewed Sally Orpin, one of the Blues supporters behind Carlton's fanzine My Blue Heaven. It is on sale before the game at Olympic Park this Friday night and they have a web site at www.vicnet.net.au/~muscovic. It's a good read and the Carlton fans are real passionate about the game. Incidentally, the Charles Dickens Tavern in Melbourne is the fanzine's new sponsor.

KINGZ CHANGE

The New Zealand Weekly Soccer Observer reports that the Kingz said

the third-round home match scheduled for October 15 against defending champions South Melbourne is likely to be switched to either Saturday night or Sunday afternoon to avoid a clash with the rugby league test at Ericsson Stadium and the semifinals of rugby's NPC. Vodafone were announced as the team's naming sponsors.

GLORY LAUNCH IN STYLE

Glory had its season launch held on 42 floor of one of Perth's highest buildings. A mega media turnout heard the announcement of new weekly soccer liftout in West Australian plus new weekly TV show and continued efforts to get away games live on TV. Then the MC asked guests to look out towards oval and a big fireworks show went off. Always done in style the Glory.

SEX RELATED INJURIES

This month's 'Medical Observer' has a small article suggesting that: 'Professional footballers may be forced to curb their sexual appetites after a report found promiscuous players are especially prone to career-threatening arthritic knee injuries triggered by sexually transmitted bacteria. The findings emerged from research carried out on 10 sportsmen - including five Premiership League footballers - with persistent knee problems. At least eight appeared to be suffering from a condition called sexually acquired reactive arthritis, or SARA. All five Premiership footballers were diagnosed with the illness.' I feel another Melissa survey coming on. Speaking of which, last week we reported that Mile Sterjovski and Tony Perinich tied for number one spot on the Cleo style survey, done by our very own Melissa Muscat. There has been a count-back and the Power striker actually won it.



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POWER PLAYS AT STADIUM AUSTRALIA

This Friday night will be an historic one for the NSL. New club Parramatta Power will play at Stadium Australia - the first time an NSL has played there.

Parramatta Stadium, the regular home of the Power, was booked a year ago for a special event this Friday, so the club has decided to use this opportunity to bring the game of soccer to the city's most impressive and recognizable sporting venue.

Power is hopeful that fans will enjoy not only the game - one which Power is hot favourite to win - but also the stadium itself, the main venue for the Olympics next year.

"We can't wait to play there and we look forward to putting on a great show for our new fans," said Power skipper Richard Plesa. "After our great comeback last week against Marconi, we feel confident of a good result and we hope all Sydney fans will turn out for a great night of soccer at a wonderful stadium."

Stadium Australia advises that public transport is the best way to get to the stadium. If you take your car you can book your parking through Ticketmaster on 136100. Tickets for the game are sold through Ticketek and the Parramatta Leagues Club. Flags and horns are

allowed, as are eskies that can fit under your seat, but there is to be no glass bottles, cans or alcohol.

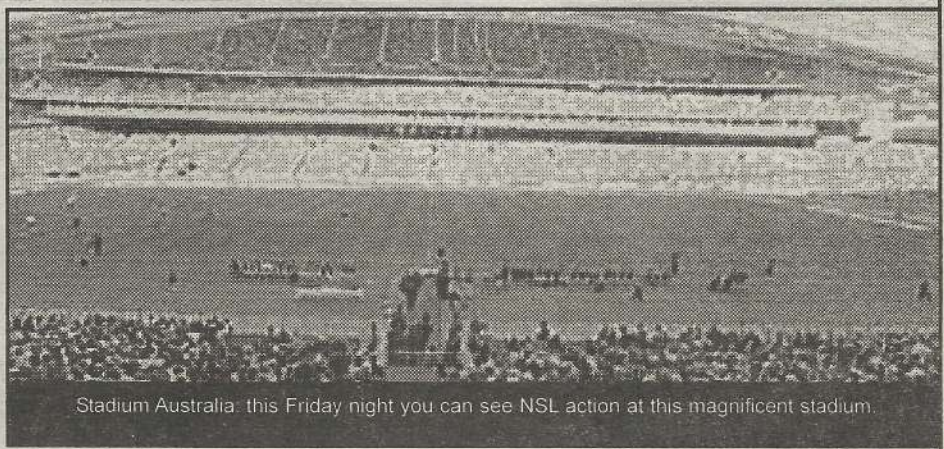
Talented Joe Simunic, the former Melbourne Knights prodigy currently with Hamburg in the Bundesliga, was last night in the Croatian U/21 squad that played against Yugoslavia in the Euro U/21 Championships.

The Australian-raised defender - widely tipped as a star player of the future - had been stalling on the decision to commit to the Olyroos. It now appears that he has made the decision to turn his back on Australia. If he gets on the park he will officially be a Croatian national team player.

Another Australian-born player, Ante Seric, was also in the U/21 squad. Seric was a bench player for the Croatian national team at France 98.

And Carlton has signed yet another sponsor. Cadbury's Picnic bar has joined up in a year-long deal worth five figures. The jersey presentation is on today (Tuesday) at Nike Melbourne, where all supporters are welcome.

This Friday night Carlton is planning some interesting match day promotional ideas. Behind the goal at the Swan Street end (on the track) will be a beer garden



Stadium Australia: this Friday night you can see NSL action at this magnificent stadium.

where you can drink and enjoy a barbecue. It is general entry. There will be a live band and fireworks as well. Melbourne Storm's match day promotions team are now working for Carlton.

On the park and coach Stuart Munro is expected to name an unchanged line-up for the game.

In other team news, Newcastle Breakers' new striker Andy Harper is doubtful for this week's game against Wolves in Newcastle, as is Travis Dodd and Vas Trpceski. Meanwhile, South's keeper Milan Udvaracz is back in Hungary on personal business, but will return for round three, and yesterday the West

Australian newspaper began a regular Monday eight-page feature liftout on Soccer called 'Super Soccer'. It features Glory and world Soccer. Vas Kalogeracos has a sore back but should be okay for their home game at Perth Oval against Marconi this weekend. Marconi meanwhile will have to do without the suspended Dominic Longo, while there is an injury cloud over defender, Buddy Farah.

We would like to thank Photosport NZ (Sandra Teddy) for the front-page photo of the Kingz v Carlton. Pictured is Robbie Middleby (left) with Carlton defender Sean Douglas.

THE POWER IS COMING

Parramatta Power

VS

Melbourne Knights

This Friday October 8 at Stadium Australia

The first ever NSL game to be held at Stadium Australia

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Gates open at 5pm, the youth league begins at 5.15pm followed by the NSL match at 7.30pm

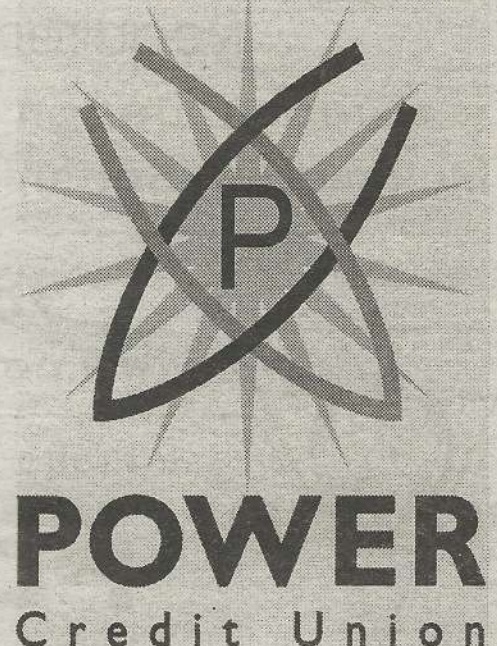


Tickets can be purchased from all Ticketek outlets-including Parramatta Leagues Club.

For season ticket information please contact the Parramatta Power Soccer Club on 9630 9777

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Cosmos spreads the soccer message



Meet Canberra Cosmos' new Marketing team. As reported last week, Cosmos players Ivo De Jesus, Nick Purdue, Harry James and Gabby Gonzales are now running the show. Their first home game had over 4,000 last Friday night (despite the heavy rain), so the guys must be doing something right. They are pictured during a promotional visit to Perisher Blue Snow fields.

WE HAVE A WINNER!

The winners of the Cosmos CD (no. 1 in Canberra) are:

1: L. Williams, Morwell, Vic

2: John Toulson, Newstead, Tas

Thanks to everyone who sent in and we will send the CDs this week. Enjoy!



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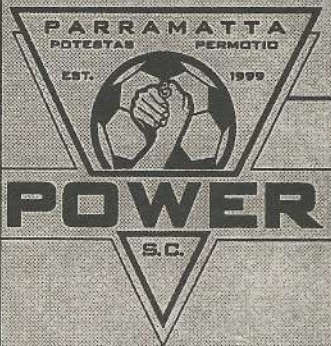
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COMMENTATOR



Parramatta boss, Davie Mitchell, clearly hasn't earned too many brownie points for his criticism of the revamped NSL draw, although the big guy probably doesn't care that much.

God love him. The truth is that 'Mitch' nailed it when he said the decision was "The easiest option for them (SA). It's making a farce of the league and I think the competition has been weakened by the decision," he was quoted as saying. And he's right!

And league GM Stefan Kamasz was not when he apparently suggested that Mitchell "should stick to coaching."

This game is in this public domain and as such everyone, including someone as football wise as Mitchell, has every right to form an opinion and elicit debate on such critical issues.

As far as footballing hard luck stories go very few come close to Adrian Santrac's 'you don't have to be dead to be stiff' routine of recent times.

Fair dinkum, the former Adelaide City champ can't take a trick in this coaching caper, with his third stint with the Adelaide Sharks again coming to an untimely end, this time with the whole club going belly-up.

His second spell at the Sharks in 1997/98 Santrac had the Sharks third on the ladder and closing, only to see red-hot Pablo Cardozo - who had scored 13 goals in as many starts that season - allowed to leave mid-year and without him they fell away.

Despite that his win/loss record over two seasons was only a single victory less than Frank Farina's over an identical 55-game period with Brisbane, yet Santrac was flicked from the Sharks job at the same time as Farina, who has since gone on to the national job, won the blue-ribbon appointment with Marconi.

Santrac's decent coaching record with a mediocre club proved to be about as much use as a fish-net condom in the end and Adrian, one of nature's gentleman, is on the dole queue again. Hopefully not for long.

Speaking of decent blokes you can't help but barrack for, I hope the powers keep an eye on low-profile Lee Sterrey at Newcastle Breakers.

The young former four-club NSL 100-gamer inherited the Breakers from John Kosmina last season. He went into his rookie year without guns like Troy Halpin, Clayton Zane and Robbie Ironside, yet Newcastle made its highest-ever league placing and ended the year less than two games from the play-offs.

Sterrey's team won 11 games last summer, just four victories less than the 15 wins the Breakers had recorded in their previous 85 matches played since returning the competition in 1995/96.

The league should be hoping that Sterrey, who is exceptionally popular at

the club, can take his young team to the next level because a healthy Newcastle franchise is potentially very lucrative for the league.

Interested to see how long it takes for the clubs at the top of the food chain to pick the near bare bones of the now sadly defunct Sharks.

Some of their quality pre-season pick-ups in Mark Yates, Brad Armour and Michael Brooks are now club-less, as are quality youngsters such as former SA state league star, Joel Porter.

Just on the Sharks, while the South Australian club has been on the ropes since Raul Blanco edged them into the play-offs a couple of times in the early 1990s it is still worth bidding this proud mob a fond farewell for surely the last time.

As West Adelaide Hellas the club won a national title in memorable circumstances way back in 1978, with well over 16,000 fans watching the Sharks come back to draw 1-1 with Adelaide City in the final game of the season to clinch the first past the post title.

And a national title is still more than can be boasted by Sydney United, Wollongong, Newcastle and Canberra combined all-time.

They cannot take it away. If you don't acknowledge the past you might as well give the caper away. On that note it is vale West Adelaide/Adelaide Sharks.

Yes, John Markovski's move back to Carlton is a record. The big fella has now shifted NSL camps nine times, to eight different clubs. Since his debut as a 15-year-old in 1986 his career has embraced Sunshine George Cross, Preston, Melbourne Knights, Marconi, Gippsland, Melbourne Knights, Canberra Cosmos, Carlton, Perth and Carlton.

Melbourne Storm's remarkable NRL triumph inadvertently did soccer a huge favour in the days following the grand final.

In a bid to herald Victoria as Australia's capital of football Melbourne's 'Herald-Sun' ran a front-page colour pic of Victoria's three successful championship team captains (with gleaming trophies in hand) in 1999, with none other than South Melbourne's Paul Trimoli getting his beaming mug in shot, front centre no less.

Good to see old friend Vicki Juric back at work at Soccer Australia. Why? Because all too often we lose decent soccer folk to the game and instead, at least this time, a half-decent soccer administrator is actually returning to the fold.

NSL ROUND ONE: COSMOS LEADS!



ROUND ONE RESULTS

Parramatta Power 1 Marconi Stallions 1
Football Kingz 0 Carlton 3
Canberra Cosmos 3 Adelaide Force 0

Gippsland Falcons 0 Perth Glory 1
Melbourne Knights 0 Brisbane Strikers 1
Wollongong Wolves 2 South Melbourne 1
Sydney Olympic 2 Newcastle Breakers 2
Sydney United v Spirit (played after press)



ROUND TWO FIXTURES

Parramatta Power v Melbourne Knights (Friday)

Carlton v Gippsland Falcons (Friday)

Newcastle Breakers v Wollongong Wolves (Friday)

Brisbane Strikers v Adelaide Force (Saturday)

Canberra Cosmos v Sydney Olympic (Sunday)

Perth Glory v Marconi Stallions (Sunday)

Sydney United v Kingz FC (Sunday)

South Melbourne v Northern Spirit (Sunday)

*fixtures correct at time of printing, check local guides for kick-off times

NSL Round one follows this page. Round two begins this Friday night with three games. The Victorian derby between Carlton and Gippsland should be a beauty, with Carlton too strong at home. The Breakers play the rejuvenated Wolves in Newcastle, the locals should be good enough ... just, while Power can expect to score a truckload of goals at Stadium Australia against the Knights. Saturday night sees the struggling Force in Brisbane, a scoredraw, while on Sunday the Cosmos v Olympic game should be a high scoring draw, Glory too strong at home to Marconi, the Kingz will struggle at Sydney United while it's anybody's guess between South and Spirit, we'll tip a draw.

	(Home)					(Away)					APts	GD
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F		
Canberra Cosmos	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Carlton	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
Wollongong Wolves	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	1
Perth Glory	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Brisbane Strikers	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Sydney Olympic	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Newcastle Breakers	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Parramatta Power	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Marconi	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
South Melbourne	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Gippsland Falcons	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Melbourne Knights	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Auckland Kingz	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adelaide Force	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0
*Sydney United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*Northern Spirit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*played at 3pm yesterday (after press)

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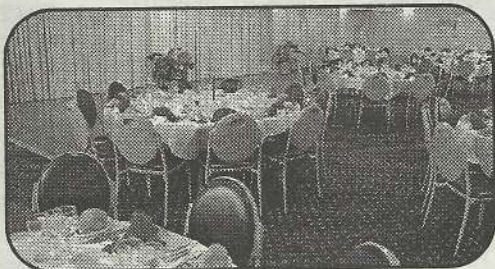
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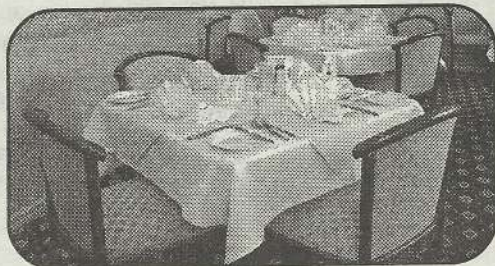
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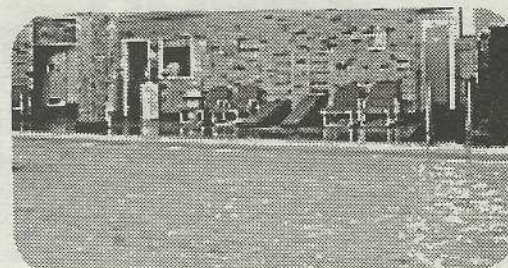
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THE FIJIAN'S REVENGE?

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2 Masi 6, Harlock 36
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1 Magnacca 89

Sunday night at Brandon Park, Wollongong. Crowd 4,831



Esala Masi (front) and Saso Petrovski. On Sunday the dynamic duo upfront for the Wolves stretched the South defence.

By Steven Webb

South Melbourne may have got the better of Nadi of Fiji to win a place in the FIFA World Club Championships but it was a sixth minute strike from Fijian international Esala Masi that brought them back to earth in their opening game of the NSL season.

When Neil Harlock scored later in the first half it seemed very unlikely the reigning premiers could wrestle the three points back from the Wollongong side.

Masi's goal, following a deft touch from Antony Surjan and a penetrating run from Scott Chipperfield, was one of several early Wollongong raids into South Melbourne territory.

For the most part, however, Wolves

changed from their usual approach and held back. Stanton and Souris were solid behind, with Spencer blocking Trimboli out of the game, Harlock badgering Lozanovski, and Huxley duelling with Coveny.

South Melbourne held better shape but Lozanovski was their only attacking player to come out on top. His free kicks, distribution and occasional forays down the right flank were the only threats to Wolves in the first half.

With four or five in the back line, Wolves were often content to fire long balls up to Masi and Petrovski. Their second goal, in the 36th minute, came from a typical Matt Horsley run down the right touchline.

Stanton, breaking with him, got into position to receive the cross at the far post but duffed the shot. Harlock arrived in time to clean up Stanton's and Jones' fumbles.

Soon after, Masi set up Spencer who blasted into a defender's back and Petrovski provided one for Masi who shot wide.

South Melbourne's best shot on target in the first half was a 45th minute free kick from Lozanovski.

The second half began with more energy from both sides. South Melbourne made the first changes even though some Wolves' legs were obviously tiring.

Chipperfield and Masi, who was prominent in attack and defence in the first half, looked reluctant to chase and Surjan's telepathic touch deserted him.



Robbie Stanton: showed why he is still highly-rated with a man-of-the-match performance.

Petrovski still looked strong, but twice broke down the left wing only to fall over South Melbourne defenders as he entered their penalty area.

For South Melbourne, Liparoti was getting the better of the Wolves forwards. Beltrame was best tested by a long Panopoulos drive, forcing Beltrame to concede a corner and, later, by a glancing header from Curcija.

Blatsis was exasperated when his cross from the right swept clean through the Wolves penalty area with no-one getting a touch. The same fate befell a cross from Magnacca after he found himself with unusual room on the left side.

At the other end, a Horsley ball from the corner came dangerously close to drifting under the crossbar. David Cervinski made the most of his brief debut for Wolves with an important header, several firm tackles and participation in Wolves' hit and run passing through mid-field.

South Melbourne, getting desperate, resorted to long balls down the middle. This paid off in time added on when Magnacca caught the defence napping and slotted the ball past an unprotected Beltrame.

After his 100th game as Wolves coach, Nick Theodorakopoulos contained his delight long enough to say, "There's a long way to go. It's a good way to start the season but the quality of the win will be judged by our performance against Newcastle at Newcastle next week."

Esala Masi, pursued by autograph hungry fans, said he wasn't surprised by his early goal. "I felt good all day. Both sides have had a good pre-season. I've been psyching myself up for it." He added that he felt "totally different" from last season — competitive, sharper and with a good first touch — and was confident he would retain his role as Wolves' striker.

After the game Lozanovski, frowning on Wolves' decision to sit back, said, "We might have looked better but they got the goals. We came out looking for a goal at the beginning of the second half, but it came too late."

Qualifying his disappointment, he said people didn't realise how hard the previous two weeks had been. South Melbourne's winning scorelines might have been high but their opponents played hard and the grounds were difficult.

He said South Melbourne would be looking forward to travelling to Brazil in

MATCH STATS



WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Daniel Beltrame, George Souris, Robert Stanton, Matthew

Horsley, Antony Surjan (David Cervinski 87), Scott Chipperfield, Neil Harlock, Noel Spencer, Saso Petrovski (Peter Lahanas 90+), David Huxley, Esala Masi (Paul Reid 72)



SOUTH MELBOURNE: Chris Jones, Steve Iosfidis, Fausto De Amicis, Con Blatsis,

David Clarkson (Anthony Magnacca 64), Steve Panopoulos, Vaughan Coveny (George Goutzoulis 64), Paul Trimboli, Michael Curcija, Goran Lozanovski, Robert Liparoti

Yellows:

Wolves: Petrovski 53, Souris 78

South: Goutzoulis 78, Curcija 90

BEST PLAYER

3 ROBBIE STANTON

2 Goran Lozanovski

1 George Souris

Referee: Matthew Breeze



Anthony Magnacca: the new South striker scored a very late consolation goal for the champions.

January but they couldn't really think about it yet. They wanted to be near the top of the table when they left Australia; they wanted all the players to be firing.

"We lost three points tonight, but we'll bounce back," he said, "but I am sure South Melbourne would be a different team at home against Northern Spirit this weekend."

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Friday night at North Harbour Stadium, Auckland, New Zealand. Crowd 8,200



Carlton's destroyer Alex Moreira: two goals in Auckland shows he has lost none of his touch.

by Jeremy Ruane

They came in their thousands to witness the event - the advent of professional football in New Zealand. And as Phil Collins' "In The Air Tonight" thundered to its climax, they were treated to a spectacular fireworks display before the match, not to mention a stirring rendition of the haka.

But what the 8,200 fans - that was the official figure, although one nearer 12,000 would probably have been closer to the mark - wanted to see most of all was a win on debut for New Zealand's first professional soccer team, Kingz FC.

Sadly for the masses, not to mention the club itself, Carlton, the Kingz' first

opponents in the thirty-four match 1999-2000 Australian National Soccer League campaign, failed to read the script, and were fully deserving of a 3-0 triumph at North Harbour Stadium.

"I've got to be pleased," said Kingz chairman Chris Turner after the game, "because we've now got professional football in New Zealand. But we were four thousand short of what we expected crowd-wise, while we're about three weeks away from being right on the field."

"There was enough out there for me tonight to know that we'll be okay in this league, but we have yet to meet the standards we have set ourselves, so in that regard, more was expected."

"But the great thing for me tonight was the fact that so many people have gone home enthusing about the great standard of football - a standard that will now be able to be seen here on a far more regular basis than has been the case to date."

Sadly for the Kingz, it was Carlton who set the benchmarks on this occasion - perhaps expectedly so, given their thorough pre-season build-up, which included a two-week tour of China.

Contrast that to the fact that the Kingz were still chasing transfer clearances right up until the first whistle. That's why Che Bunce started on the bench, and player-coach Wynton Rufer, who really shouldn't be playing until mid-November to allow his shoulder injury ample time to recover from a recent operation, started out in a most unfamiliar: sweeper.

It wasn't the only surprise on offer. Another was the actual size of the pitch. Length-wise, not a problem, but it had certainly been taken in a yard or three on both sides since the SWANZ and Chatham Cup Finals took place on September 18 - a winger's paradise this was not!

That said, there were plenty of wide-open spaces on the right-hand side of the Kingz defence in the 27th minute, although the alarm bells had rung just two minutes prior.

Playmaker Andrew Marth delivered a slide-rule pass which, allied to Mike Conroy's pace in attack, opened up the Kingz rearguard. Only a despairing tackle by Levent Osman - the former Gippsland Falcon - saved the day for the home side, but not even the Kingz most recent recruit could prevent Carlton opening the scoring moments later.

Marth spotted Sean Douglas, Carlton's All White defender, scampering down the left as he surged forward to join the attack, and delivered a peach of a crossfield pass into his path.

There wasn't a Kingz player within ten yards of the Kiwi as he charged towards the byline, from where he delivered a low cross to the near post which Alex Moreira gleefully steered home unchallenged.

Worse was to come for the Kingz, for within four minutes they were two goals in arrears.

Mark Atkinson, the other All White in Carlton's ranks, delivered the early ball which allowed the speedy Moreira to spring the Kingz offside trap.

Around the advancing Michael Utting he strode before coolly steering

home his, and Carlton's, second goal of the evening, despite the despairing efforts of Osman to clear off the line.

"We've got to work now to sign up the likes of Douglas and Atkinson for next season," said a cheeky yet honest Rufer after the game.

The momentum, at this point, was with the visitors, but it could have changed around oh so quickly had the rub of the green gone the Kingz way in the next four minutes.

Straight from the kick-off following Moreira's second strike, Chilean striker Aaron Silva - a little box of tricks who looks like he's going to be a real crowd favourite - dribbled his way through the massed ranks of Carlton defenders and into the penalty area, where his run came to an earthbound end.

Referee Simon Micallef didn't even hesitate in giving a penalty, much to the furore of Carlton's contingent, who, from this vantage point, certainly had a case.



Wynton Rufer: the legendary Kiwi striker started as a sweeper for the Kingz.

So in some ways, justice was served when Dean Anastasiadis dived to his right to turn away Chris Jackson's poorly struck 32nd minute spot-kick.

Three minutes later, the Kingz best chance came to pass, Silva its creator. Down the right he swept before cutting the ball back from the byline. Fred de Jong, who on Tuesday celebrated the birth of his third child, met the ball with a fine diving

MATCH STATS

KINGZ: Utting; Osman, Rufer (Perry 77), Moya, (Bunce 46); Middleby, Jackson, Mennillo, Stergiopoulos (Van Steeden 77), Vichelich; Silva, de Jong.

CARLTON: Anastasiadis; Deans, McPherson, Douglas (Packer 60); Tricarico, Marth (Thompson 83), Atkinson, Lapsansky, Slater; Conroy, Moreira (Markovski 72)

Yellows:
KINGZ: Moya 14, Middleby 25, Stergiopoulos 71, de Jong 60
CARLTON: Moriera 19

BEST PLAYERS:

1: MOREIRA (Carlton)
2: McPHERSON (Carlton)
3: SILVA (Kingz)

Referee: Simon Micallef

header, only to be denied by the crossbar - the closest the Kingz came to a goal on debut.

The killer goal came four minutes after the interval, Moreira the architect, as opposed to the executioner, on this occasion.

He strode to the byline on the left, before cutting inside past Osman and clipping in a cross towards the near post. Marth was fast arriving, so too half-time substitute Bunce.

The former won the race - just - and guided the ball beyond the bemused figure of Utting into the far corner of the net to wrap up the scoring.

The best-performed black-shirted players were Osman, Ivan Vichelich - playing in an unfamiliar left wing-back role - and Silva, but the best players on the park wore Carlton red.

Former Rangers and Hearts defender Dave McPherson was class personified in defence, while ex-West Ham midfielder Stuart Slater was a hive of energy in his team's engine room, where captain Marth was also to the fore, as he led Carlton to an overall fully deserved opening night triumph.

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A night out in Mexico
with Michael Utting



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TONY FRANKEN: THE BEST NSL KEEPER?

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0

PERTH GLORY 1 Boutsianis 38

Saturday night at Mobil Park, Morwell. Crowd 2,450



Glory's Alistair Edwards ... came on in the 60th minute

By Lucio Viggiano

Perth Glory's long trip to Mobil Park, the home of the Gippsland Falcons for the opening round of the 1999/2000 National League season ended in the result many would have expected and predicted, but those who made the trip to Mobil Park, witnessed a game that in no way reflected the final result.

The Gippsland Falcons, whom most had written off before the season had even kicked off, showed enormous commitment and heart to out play one of the more fancied sides in the competition.

Jeff Hopkins put out a youthful side that outplayed the Glory for most of the game and created the best scoring chances on the night.

If not for the class of Franken in goal, who continues to show he is still one of the best keepers in the country and a

defensive misunderstanding between Jevdjovic and Gotis, the Glory may well have made the long trip back home rather embarrassed.

The match began at a frantic pace with both sides trying to assert their authority in midfield. Glory's new Brazilian import Edgar jnr and the impressive Ergic were giving the Falcons midfield no time on the ball, forcing high balls which Harnwell and Valle in the Glory defence were having little trouble dealing with.

The first chance of the game went to the Falcons in the 18 minute when a Gotis cut back from the left was only half cleared by the Glory, and Clayton Bell hit a powerful shot from outside the box which Franken somehow managed to turn past the upright.

This seemed to give the Falcons confidence and at the same time shake up the Glory who realised they were going to have to battle hard to get a result from the game.

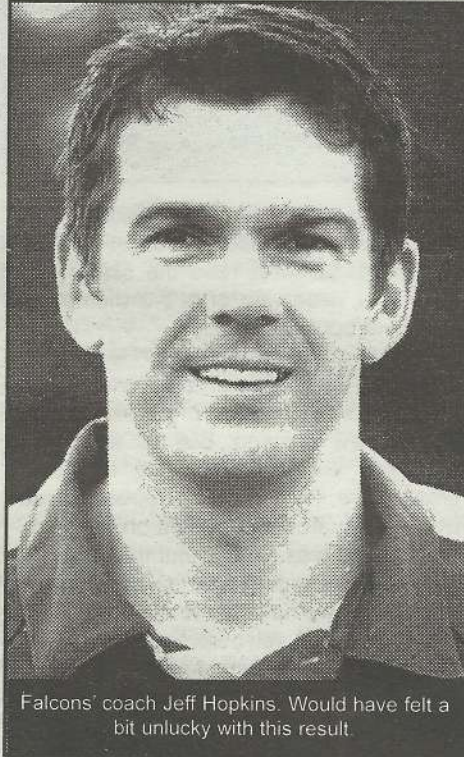
The Falcons dominated the next 20 minutes with Glory happy to sit back and absorb the pressure. Juan Nilo in his debut NSL game for the Falcons was becoming a handful for the tall Glory defenders with his speed and ability to turn quickly.

On two occasions in the first half, Nilo managed to get behind the Glory defence, only to be thwarted by the brilliant goalkeeping of Franken.

At the other end Boutsianis and Despotovski were looking sharp, but disciplined marking by Gotis and Savage, martialled in defence by their new captain Mehmet Durakovic, seemed to have all the answers.

What was to be the turning point of the match and the three points for Glory happened in the 38 minute when Manny Gotis attempted to back-head the ball to his keeper Jevdjovic. Jevdjovic seemed slow to react to the back pass, which saw the ever alert Boutsianis dart in and execute a looping header over the advancing keeper. 1-0 Perth Glory.

The second half began with the same intensity as the first with play translating from end to end. In the 60 minute after his second heavy knock,



Falcons' coach Jeff Hopkins. Would have felt a bit unlucky with this result

Kalogeracos was replaced by Edwards who brought some much needed muscle to the Glory forward line.

The change had an immediate impact with Glory creating some good chances and testing the Falcons defence.

Ergic was very impressive for the Glory making strong and direct runs from the midfield and threatening the Falcons goal on a number of occasions.

After a Falcons corner in the 62 minute, Nilo again showed his great skills



Glory defender Jamie Harnwell: the young West Australian picked up a yellow in this game.

MATCH STATS



GIPPSLAND FALCONS

Jevdjovic - Gotis - Durakovic
- Savage - Marcina - Vargas
(Hastie 70 min) - Bell - Puca
- Hutchinson - Nilo -
MacNicol (Subs not used:
Katz - Buhargiar)



PERTH GLORY

Franken - Trajkovski -
Harnwell - Valle - Miller (Carbone J. 80) - Naven - Edgar - Ergic (Afkos 92) - Boutsianis - Despotovski - Kalogeracos (Edwards 60)

Yellows

Falcons: Vargas 10, Jevdjovic 93

Glory: Edgar 55, Ergic 75, Harnwell 80

BEST PLAYER

3 Tony Franken (Glory)

2 Juan Nilo (Gippsland Falcons)

1 Mehmet Durakovic (Falcons)

Referee: Wayne Dade

by turning onto a loose ball in the eighteen yard box and hitting a shot that Franken watched with relief as it only just flashed past his left upright.

A great header by Despotovski after



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a teasing corner by Boutsianis was also well saved down to his right by Jevdjovic.

The Glory tightened their defence and managed to hold onto the lead to finish the game with the three points they expected, but in many ways were gifted.

No doubt the Glory will only get stronger when Edgar adapts to Australian football and the likes of Halpin and their two gun recruits Wehrman and Buljan take the field.

The Falcons on the other hand showed that they will be competitive and difficult to beat down in the Latrobe Valley.

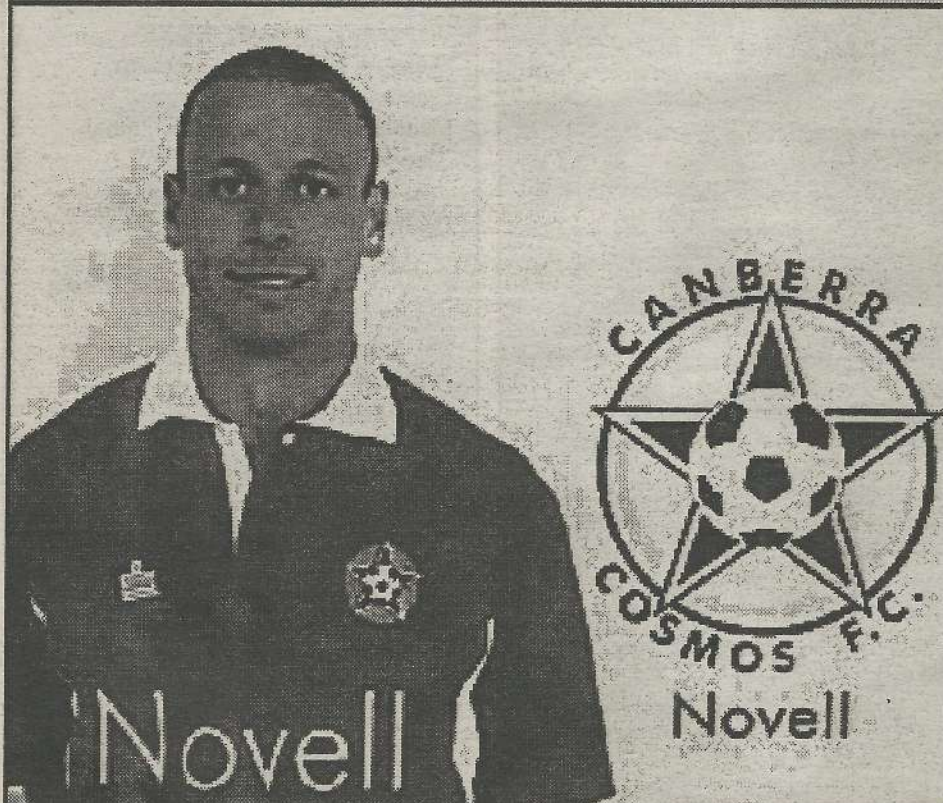
The best player on the night for me was the Glory keeper Tony Franken who showed all his experience and that he is still one of the best going around.

Juan Nilo, a consistent scorer in the Victorian Premier league showed he has what it takes to step up to the big league, while the evergreen Mehmet Durakovic has lost none of his defensive skills and undoubted class.

PROMISING START FOR SERMANNI'S COSMOS

CANBERRA COSMOS 3 Watkins 21, 67, Castro 41. ADELAIDE FORCE 0

Friday night at Bruce Stadium, Canberra, Crowd 4,425



Another impressive display by Canberra's rock hard defender, the uncompromising Danny Burt. Cosmos are at home to Sydney Olympic this week.

By Dylan Durie

The Canberra Cosmos made their best ever start to an NSL season when they defeated Adelaide Force 3-0 at Bruce Stadium on Friday night.

It was also their first defeat of the Adelaide club after ten attempts, with two goals from Cosmos debutante Danny Watkins and one from Alex Castro.

It was Adelaide who settled earlier and began to look dangerous, a ninth minute corner finding Nathan Day whose bullet header was destined for the top corner, before Dave Arranz headed away for the Cosmos.



Harry James: a late substitute for Cosmos.

Four minutes later Nick Sabljak got in behind the home defence but nobody was on hand to finish his clever ball across the face of goal.

Adelaide had another chance shortly after when new Cosmos Captain Robbie Hooker had to react sharply to clear Sabljak's header down for Damian Mori in the six yard box.

Just as Cosmos fans feared another drubbing, Michael Musitano manufactured a goal that turned the game on its head.

He brilliantly turned two defenders out on the right, then swung in a pinpoint cross for Glen Kolpak at the far post to head across goal for Watkins, who nodded home.

The goal demoralised Adelaide and inspired Canberra, as it was the Cosmos who dominated for the remainder of the 90 minutes, the Force unable to find an answer to the determination of the home side.

In the 27th minute Alex Tobin was forced to clear off the line when Danny Burt met Jason Polak's inswinging free-kick, then Watkins produced a great save by Force 'keeper Anthony Broaden from 20m after beating two men.

The pressure told in the 41st minute when a Cosmos corner by Polak found the unmarked Alex Castro whose looping header managed to evade Louis Brain standing on the post.

The second half was a relatively tame affair with the Force unable to get in to the game and Canberra content with their lead.

The first chance of the half fell to Danny Watkins who didn't quite know what to do with a Gaby Gonzalez cross that came to him at an awkward height, and he spooned it wide from close range.

On the hour mark Ivan Zelic completed his unhappy return to his home town when he put on a petulant display after being substituted, throwing his water bottle and jacket away. Zelic had struggled to get in to the game.

In the 65th minute the Force had their best chance when Cosmos 'keeper Grant Barlow came charging off his line for no apparent reason and Sabljak looped a 15m header towards goal, but Danny Burt raced back to clear at the very

last.

Canberra then immediately added to their lead with Gonzalez sending in a dangerous cross from the right that Kolpak headed on for Watkins to ram home from a tight angle at the far post.

The only low point of the game for the Cosmos came in the 82nd minute when Damian Mori made a crude, studs up challenge on Barlow who had to be helped from the field.

With no 'keeper on the bench it was central defender Toppy Popovich who took over custodian duties for the final few minutes.

The final action in the game came when substitutes Ivo De Jesus and Harry James played a clever one-two on the edge of the Force' area, culminating in a strong left foot shot from De Jesus and a good save from Broaden.

The Cosmos players were jubilant after their victory, running over to celebrate with their enthusiastic fans.

For the home side, Polak was at the heart of all their play while Robbie Hooker and Danny Burt had strong games at the back. Coach Tom Sermanni would also be pleased at the partnership formed by Kolpak and Watkins up front.

The Force have some work to do after a display that lacked heart and fight. Coach Zoran Matic would not have been pleased with the way his team folded after the first goal.

Cosmos coach Tommy Sermanni, speaking later, said he was delighted for the players, but was wary of making too much of one result.

"I think we were worthy winners, but for the first thirty minutes they dominated but we were fortunate enough to score first.

"I thought we defended very well with Hooker, Arranz and Burt, plus Danny Watkins upfront.

MATCH STATS:

CANBERRA COSMOS: (3-5-2)
Barlow (Zwangobani 86), Popovich, Burt, Polak, Watkins, Castro, Musitano (James 62), Arranz, Hooker, Kolpak (De Jesus 80), Gonzalez.



ADELAIDE FORCE: (4-4-2) Broaden, Zelic (Talladira 59), Ivanovic, Tobin, Mori, Sabljak, Vidmar, Day, Brain (Veart 71), Costanzo, Kim.



Sub not used: Cartwright

YELLOWS:

Canberra Cosmos:
Musitano 36, Burt 45
Adelaide Force: Costanzo 27, Ivanovic 37, Sabljak 82, Veart 90

BEST PLAYERS

3: Jason Polak (Cosmos)
2: Danny Watkins (Cosmos)
1: Robbie Hooker (Cosmos)

Referee: Con Dioniis

"The reality is we have to do well week by week, and we should not get carried with the result.

"I think people here are relieved with the result. De Jesus' nagging back injury is hopefully to be fixed soon.

"As for Adelaide Force, they are a quality side and they will be around at the business end of the season."

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HARPER'S HAPPY BREAKERS DEBUT

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 2 Juric 17, Kalantzis 44
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2 Wilson 15, Harper 71

Sunday night at Belmore Sports Ground, Sydney. Crowd 5,184



Olympic captain Peter Tskenis

By Ben Cubby

A powerful second-half header from Andy Harper earned Newcastle Breakers a 2-2 draw with ten-man Sydney Olympic at Belmore Sportsground on Sunday evening. Olympic did most of the attacking, but the dismissal of defender Scott Thomas for a second yellow card offence in the 48th minute allowed the Breakers back into this match.

After a tight opening period of 1999/2000 league action, both sides began to loosen up and string together some promising moves.

Recalled Olympic 'keeper George Bouhoutsos was twice called upon to snatch the ball from the feet of a rampaging Andy Harper in the first few minutes.

Bouhoutsos was at fault, though, when the Breakers opened the scoring in the 15th minute.

He left his line to claim a floating corner from Vas Trpceviski, but Newcastle midfielder Mark Wilson reached the ball first and drilled a header into the unguarded net.

The goal stung Olympic into action and their reply was almost immediate. Last season's leading scorer Pablo Cardozo flicked the ball over the Newcastle backline and into the path of Ante Juric, who was pushing forward to support the attack.

The gangling defender controlled with his first touch and then chipped over the advancing Bob Catlin to level the score.

Newcastle's teenage midfielder Greg Owens drew a fine save from Bouhoutsos shortly afterwards when the veteran custodian tipped one of his trademark long range shots just wide of the post.

As the match progressed, the hard work of Gabriel Mendez and Scott Thomas enabled Olympic to gain the upper hand in midfield.

The Newcastle goal lived dangerously through a series of corners and Catlin did well to keep out a snap shot from Cardozo in the 34th minute.

The pressure told when Olympic hit the lead two minutes into stoppage time at the end of the first half. Cardozo was again the provider, curling in a well-weighted cross from the right.

Chris Kalantzis ghosted in behind the defence and met the ball with a flying header which gave Catlin no chance.

The modest home crowd of 5,184 could reasonably have expected Olympic to go on with the job in the second half, but it was not to be.

Scott Thomas, already booked for a reckless challenge in the seventh minute, was sent for an early shower by referee Jeremy Blaney. Thomas - who was allegedly struck by a firework during the pre-match entertainment - probably should have known better than to question a decision when already sitting on a yellow card, but the referee's rather strict interpretation of the rulebook seemed harsh to many observers.

Newcastle didn't mind though, and they surged forward in search of an equaliser.

Harper ran onto Mark Wilson's through ball in the 52nd minute and his powerful shot hurtled inches over the bar. Another Harper effort was blocked soon after and the rebound fell to Trpceviski, whose low shot was tipped just around the post by Bouhoutsos.

The Breakers' second goal was almost identical to their first. Bouhoutsos was left stranded by a Trpceviski cross



Happy day for Andy Harper

and this time it was the busy Harper who headed home. Newcastle rarely threatened in attack after the goal, however, with Olympic looking the most likely to snare victory.

Olympic substitute Zlatko Arambasic, making his long awaited return to Australian football after several years overseas, provided some spark up front for the home side.

A flowing move involving Arambasic and Lyndsay Wilson set up Peter Zorbas in the 77th minute, but the youngster shot wide from a narrow angle.

The Breakers defended resolutely in the dying moments of the game. Andy Roberts, who replaced impressive Newcastle debutante Peter Juchniewicz late on, summed up their commitment with a match-saving tackle on Brett Emerton deep into stoppage time.

After the match, Newcastle coach

MATCH STATS

SYDNEY OLYMPIC:

Bouhoutsos, Thomas (RC 48), Tskenis, Baillie, Juric, Cardozo, Emerton, Kalantzis (Arambasic 58), Mendez (Carle 70), Wilson, Zorbas (Cervinski 78)

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS:

Catlin, Pryce, McManus, Sprod, Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia, Owens (Tomich 66), Trpceviski (Angievski 78), Harper, Juchniewicz (Roberts 81)

Yellows:

Olympic: Zorbas 36, Mendez 57, Tskenis 72

Breakers

Trpceviski 41

Red:

Thomas (Olympic) 47

Best Player

3 MARK WILSON (NEWCASTLE)

2 Pablo Cardozo (Olympic)

1 Andy Harper (Newcastle)

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

Lee Sterrey said "I thought the overall intensity and workrate was good. I'm expecting Harper to score a dozen this year."

However, due to a lack of pre-season warm up games, it may take his side five or six weeks to start hitting their straps.

Sydney Olympic boss Branko Culina stated: "Sydney United drew with Newcastle in the first round last year and went on to win the minor premiership".

Offering no criticism of the refereeing decisions, he said "we thought we were going to win, until the man got sent off. It could have been better, it could have been worse."



Another solid game from Big Bob Catlin in the Breakers goal

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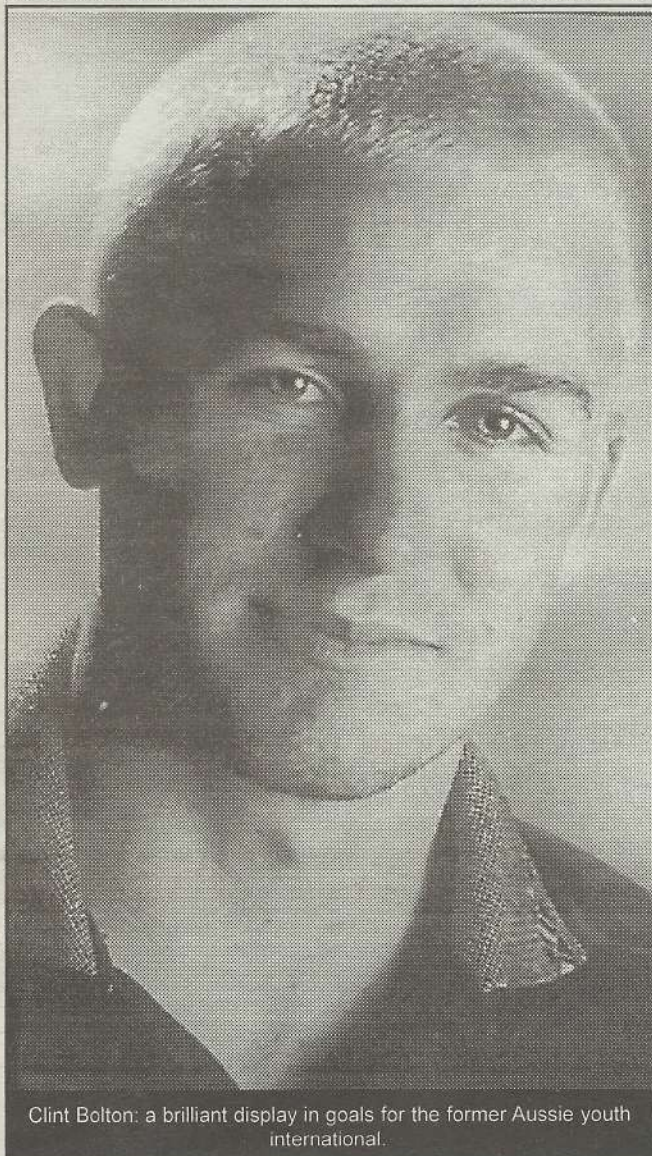
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BOLTON THE BRAVE THWARTS KNIGHTS

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0

BRISBANE STRIKERS 1 Peter Dwyer 69

Sunday afternoon at Knights Stadium, Melbourne New Zealand. Crowd 4,500



Clint Bolton: a brilliant display in goals for the former Aussie youth international.

By Mark Fisher

So here we are after Round 1 of the new NSL season. It is only early days, but with the rising quality of the competition arrayed against them, the Melbourne Knights and the Brisbane Strikers showed in their first season outing that both have a lot of work to do, especially if they are to seriously threaten for a top six spot.

Brisbane, a side with an appalling head-to-head record against the Knights, were perhaps fortunate to grab an away win on Sunday at Knights Stadium, particularly as the match could well have ended in a scoreless draw between two teams desperate to relive past glories.

The grey Melbourne sky overhead was not a good omen for the Knights, who were hoping for a bumper crowd to start their season with.

One positive for them though was the announcement of a new one-year sponsorship deal with Sky Air, the logo of which proudly emblazoned on the Knights traditional red home strip.

The Knights got away well from the starting whistle. In the first minute a promising play from Michael Reda to Ivan Kelic and then on to Ante Kovacevic was spawned, only for the ball to be cleared in defence by Brisbane.

Joe Rahjer also involved himself early, drawing a foul from defender Leo Langone. This proved to be the first bookable offence of the match.

Langone got a taste of his own medicine only three minutes later, when

Michael Reda connected with him unfairly. The second of three yellow cards for the match was then issued. With undisciplined play coming to the fore, match referee Gerry Connolly had decided to stamp his authority on the contest.

For the rest of the half the Melbourne Knights created most of the play, with a number of attacks stemming from Ransford Banini's willingness to get forward as much as he could.

His midfield forays made it look as though the Knights were playing a more of a 3-5-2 formation instead of the classic 4-4-2 they often employ. Banini also backed up well when the situation required it, keeping Brisbane's rare first half counter-attacks at bay.

Mijo Trupkovic often looked dangerous down the left flank, at times running around his marker in Matt Bell. In the 26th minute, a brilliant weaving run by Mark Silic eluded three of Brisbane's back men - but his decisive through ball unfortunately eluded Trupkovic.

Once again the Knights were denied when the Strikers' Shane Stefanutto defused some great build-up work by a combination of Rahjer, Trupkovic and Banini.

The game needed a standout performer to give it some spark, and goalie Clint Bolton put his hand up to answer that call.

The tall Queenslander managed a crouched save with shins forward to keep Silic out again, following a neat pass provided by Rahjer. Bolton then plucked a dangerous high ball out of the sky when Banini's tidy cross looked to be heading in

Trupkovic's direction. The Knights clearly had the better of the first half, but could not convert any of the chances that presented themselves.

After the half-time interval, Brisbane switched from a mostly defensive attitude to one of attack, with instant results. Jeromy Harris took advantage of a high cross to header the ball wide about three minutes into the second half. Momentum and luck both shifted in the Striker's favour, after perhaps the most critical moment of the match.

Clint Bolton made a beautiful save at about the 51st minute, to thwart what was a golden chance for the Knights to score.

It happened this way: Dragi Nastevski planted the foot down and out-paced the defence, and at the end of his 40-metre burst his powerful shot was met by Bolton's outstretched right arm. The ball flew just wide of the goal, and so the game was still scoreless.

The marked shift in possession was becoming something of a concern to

Knights coach Joe Biskic. To improve the situation, he made two substitutions within three minutes, bringing on Zeljko Susa for the restricted Michael Reda and Brandon Vassallo for Ransford Banini.

At roughly the same time, John Kosmina replaced Jeromy Harris with star recruit Greg Di Losa, who sported a pony-tail and plenty of pace to burn.

Di Losa immediately kept the Knights back line honest with a couple of searching forward runs.

The one goal of the match finally came when Northern Spirit-discard Paul Foster sent a well-weighted cross to Peter Dwyer inside the 18-yard box. Dwyer then guided a slow-looping header deep into the left side of the net, much to the dismay of Martin John in goals and Dragi Nastevski at the post.

There was speculation that defender Rody Vargas was unfairly brought down during the play, but it certainly went unnoticed by the match referee.

The Strikers had hit the lead with barely a quarter of the match remaining.

This was to be a telling blow. One sensed that a result was now out of the Knight's reach, but true to their character they didn't stop trying.

At the 87th minute mark, Trupkovic went on another breakaway run, right through the middle of Brisbane's defensive line, but his shot went directly to the outstretched arms of Bolton.

Silic then ventured forward on the

MATCH STATS

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS:

Martin John, Joe Rahjer, Ante Kovacevic, Jason Vukadin, Mark Silic, Dragi Nastevski, Ivan Kelic, Mijo Trupkovic, Ransford Banini (Brandon Vassallo 67), Rody Vargas, Michael Reda (Zeljko Susa 65")

BRISBANE STRIKERS:

Clint Bolton, Glenn Gwynne, Shane Stefanutto, Matt Bell, Brad Ditton, Dave Pilic, Paul Foster, Peter Dwyer (Wade Baldwin 85"), Stuart McLaren, Leo Langone, Jeromy Harris (Greg Di Losa 67")

Yellows:

Strikers: Leo Langone 7, Stuart McLaren 56.

Knights:

Michael Reda 9

Best Player:

3 - CLINT BOLTON

(BRISBANE STRIKERS)

2 - Ransford Banini (Melbourne Knights)

1 - Joe Rahjer (Melbourne Knights)

Referee: Gerry Connolly



Strong Strikers defensive lynchpin Glenn Gwynne.

right flank, but pressure from both Stefanutto and Bolton (again) forced him to launch his shot well over the bar.

The Knights faithful remained subdued throughout the game, and it really wasn't hard to see why.

At the post-match conference, Brisbane coach John Kosmina indicated he was fairly happy to earn a first up win.

The Knights' Joe Biskic on the other hand, whilst saying he was pleased with the commitment of his players, didn't feel

Brisbane thoroughly earned the win. "I'm only unhappy with the result but nothing else, but hopefully we can bounce back next week", Biskic said.

It certainly wasn't their most inspired victory, but the Strikers will be pleased to have three early points in the bank, all the same.

BENNETT THE POWER SAVER!

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MARCONI STALLIONS 1 S. Babic 54

Friday night at Parramatta Stadium, Sydney, Crowd 8,021



Sean Babic: a man-of-the-match performance from the nippy Marconi striker

By Paul Goodwin

At last the curtain lifted on the latest addition to the ranks of Sydney NSL clubs when Parramatta Stadium welcomed a crowd in excess of 8,000 to see the new home side Power entertain giants Marconi, on a night marred by a thunderstorm just hours before the kick off.

The crowd may have been reluctant to emerge from their homes in quite the numbers anticipated and the heavy rain that fell on Parramatta Stadium before 5.30 left the surface very greasy, but there was no doubting the two sides' approach to the game; it was full on.

The home side, adapting to their new surroundings, began the more purposeful-

ly and enjoyed by far the greater share of the ball in the first half hour or so.

Some fierce early tackling by Power defenders Steve Eagleton and Jacob Burns saw referee Brett Hugo reach for yellow cards twice in the first five minutes, but it was more a measure of the Parramatta side's attempts to come to grips with a lively side on a tricky surface than any malice on their part.

Milan Blagojevic gave Marconi a fright twice from free kicks won around the edge of the area in the opening 20 minutes. He drilled a low shot inches wide of the left post in the 12th and eight minutes later forced the Stallions' raw young keeper, David Aceski, to dive brilliantly, low to his left, to push another goal-bound effort around the other upright.

Marconi's remaining Italian import Paolo Marchesini - the other Pierluigi Di Gia is out for five months

with an injury already - was also showing good form with a shot just pushed away for a corner in the 9th after a Brendan Renaud ball played in down the left.

He then latched onto a ball fed through to him by Darren McDonald on the half hour to set up Sean Babic with a diagonal pass, that the striker accepted, before testing Andrew Crews with a shot at point blank range.

Two minutes later Babic, who by now was becoming a real handful for the Power defence, burst into the penalty area on the right and was impeded by Michael Santalab, which led to Hugo pointing to the spot.

Unfortunately for Marconi their polished Korean sweeper Pan-Keun Kim

drove the ball wide of the left upright and Parramatta fans breathed a sigh of relief.

The locals woke up again after this and twice went very close to breaking the deadlock.

Walter Ardone drove the ball just wide from a free kick in the dying stages and then in first half stoppage time Mile Sterjovski and Joel Griffiths combined and fed the ball out wide to the overlapping Jacob Burns whose smart cross was swept a whisker wide of that same left post by Ardone.

The second half belonged to Marconi, the final moments aside, with the Stallions showing much more passion right from the restart.

While Aceski was forced to save down low from yet another well struck Blagojevic free kick in the 50th minute, it came as no real surprise when Marconi opened the scoring in the 54th.

Mark Babic, rock solid at the back, played a long ball from deep on the right to Sean Babic and the gifted striker went past Richard Plesa as if the Parramatta defender was standing still.

Babic was then able to tuck the ball past Crews from 12 yards out with a polished, low finish.

Crews then needed to use his feet to save again from Babic in the 56th and three minutes later dived to push a Babic header over the bar.

Chad Gibson illustrated how dominant Marconi were becoming at this stage by rushing out of defence to smash a piledriver against the left upright in the 70th.

But all that changed moments later when Stallions' defender and captain Dominic Longo was shown a red card for a second bookable offence, a challenge on Angelucci that did not win favour from referee Hugo.

It may well have changed the game as Power emerged from their defensive endeavours thereafter to re-enter the match at least as equal partners in terms of possession, even if numerically they held a distinct advantage.

Power substitute Jon Angelucci did not endear himself to his coach, who had words with his new recruit after the game, when he got on the end of a smart cross from the right byline by Steve Eagleton in the 78th. The former Blacktown City player hit the ball wide with his right foot at the far post when a return ball into the box looked a better option.

Marconi's replacement Harry Karl, however, proved much more dangerous, his pace and confidence on the ball being quickly noted and when a snap shot of his in the 85th was blocked the rebound was driven straight at Crews by Danny Invincible.

Marconi began to look at using up time as the game wound down and they tried to keep possession for a while in the middle of the park.

Burns won the ball deep into stoppage time and played a lofted ball into the Marconi penalty area where both Invincible and Trajanovski appeared to be covering well, but they reckoned without the sharpness of Peter Bennett who got to the ball before either of his opponents and hit the ball like a bullet into the left hand roof of the net for an unexpected equaliser.

Bennett was to have started the game, but had been one of the last players to transfer across from Sydney United where he resurrected his NSL career last season, so David Mitchell decided to leave him on the bench.

MATCH STATS



PARRAMATTA POWER: A Crews, R Plesa, J Vrkic, M Santalab (J Gibson 70), S Eagleton, D Townsend (P Bennett 72), W Ardone, J Burns, M Blagojevic, M Sterjovski, J Griffiths (J Angelucci 59)



MARCONI STALLIONS: D Aceski, C Gibson, M Babic, D Longo, P Kim, D McDonald, M Smith, B Renaud, S Babic (Karl 80), K Trajanovski, P Marchesini (Invincible 70)

YELLOW:

Power: Steve Eagleton 3, Jacob Burns 5, Michael Santalab 32, Richard Plesa 70, Milan Blagojevic 70

Marconi: Dominic Longo 20 and 71

Red: Dominic Longo 71 (second bookable offence)

Best Player

3 SEAN BABIC
 2 Jacob Burns
 1 Milan Blagojevic

Referee: Brett Hugo

On this showing he is going to be hard to keep out for the rest of this season now and his career appears back on course for good.

Marconi made one last attempt to win the game with a superb 25 yard strike from Brendan Renaud which Crews pushed over the bar superbly before the whistle finally sounded, a minute too late for the Stallions and their supporters on this occasion.

Parramatta coach David Mitchell tended to agree with his Marconi counterpart, Eddie Krncevic, that the Longo send off was harsh, but also felt that there were too many cards altogether as it was not a dirty game by any means.

Mitchell was full of praise for Mile Sterjovski who, while he did not score, led the line with great deal of commitment and whose work-rate pleased his coach enormously. He also singled out keeper Andrew Crews for a special mention as many of his saves were crucial.

Krncevic acknowledged his own keeper, David Aceski, as putting in a much more confident performance and explained that talk of another young custodian, Michael Turnbull, joining the club permanently was premature as he still had some time to go with the AIS and would join the club later in the season.

The Marconi coach felt that Sean Babic was a stand out and will terrify defences this season, describing the youthful striker as "deadly".

His backline was also as solid as a rock, the role forced upon Kris Trajanovski also bringing out a strong showing by the converted striker on the day.

Power's goalscoring hero Peter Bennett quipped that he did not score very often, but when he did it was usually goals like the one he scored today!

And as Super subs go he was about as super as they come.

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Power line-up before their first game.

By John Vrtaric

Parramatta Power's debut in Australia's National Soccer League (NSL) did not get off to the best of starts. Their entry into the NSL was heralded during the off season and as a result enormous expectations were placed upon the shoulders of the fledgling club.

With the success of the Northern

Spirit last season football fans expected a new 'mainstream' club like Power to achieve the same sort of success on the field and off the field.

In particular, hopes were high that the opening game of the 1999/2000 season would produce another record crowd just as it did with Spirit last year.

Nature intervened and made it much more difficult - a severe thunderstorm a couple of hours before the start of the

By Aidan Ormond

For a team that has never played in front of its fans there was always going to be that strange feeling that you were at another team's ground.

Yet the atmosphere steadily lifted as the game wore on, with the last gasp goal from Peter Bennett capping it off for the new home fans.

Of course Marconi fans were

'Ricky'. Not only did he not look like Ricky Martin, his lip sync was so out of time he looked like he was still singing the previous tune. Still he had all the moves and that's the most important thing to any Ricky aficionado (of which I am not one.)

Anyway, *The Cup of Life* is always guaranteed to pump up a soccer crowd (it has been used at every club launch, awards night and function in Australian soc-



also there, although one can't help but think what it may have been like if the Bob Stenders from Spirit were there to see their heroes?

As for the content of the fans in the ground, it was a clear cross-section of society, fulfilling that broad-based notion the club has always wanted.

It was a little surprising to see a few younger fans wearing the Eels Rugby League shirts.

As for the entertainment, there was plenty despite the clouds and heavy rain prior to the kick-off.

There was the 'Ricky Martin Show' which consisted of a lot of Spanish looking dancers prancing about 'Samba' style while 'Ricky' sang the usual tunes.

Well, sang may be a bit extreme. Lip synced could be a more accurate description. And that was my only beef with

cer since 1998 and shows no signs of abating.)

Then there was the cheerleaders, the fireworks, the music, all the usual stuff.

The voiceover man was the smooth tones of an FM jock who had some trouble pronouncing the players' names (Blagojevic, Sterjovski and Trajanovski in particular), but he kept his cool while others would have thrown a hissy fit.

As we left I asked Jake, 6, from Westmead what he thought of the night. He said the favourite part of the evening was when Peter Bennett scored.

So in the end the Peter Bennett Show that outdid the Ricky Martin Show, but the jury is still out on whether Power will be a Spirit.

Their next home game at Parra Stadium should give us more of an indication.

POWER'S BIG NIGHT

REVIEW

game made many potential supporters think twice. Flooding in some suburbs around Power's home ground made them think even more.

Being in existence for only a few months prevented Power from carrying out the marketing plan that it had envisaged - thousands of free tickets to be given out to junior players have not yet been disseminated. A well run Rugby League club it may be but the Parramatta Leagues Club, the owners of Power, administration and the organisation as a whole needs to learn the nuances of the football supporters that they are targeting.

Many football supporters are skeptical of Power, or more precisely the Parramatta Leagues Club. They question the commitment of the Rugby League club to the long term success of its football arm.

Although all concerned vow that they in it for the long haul supporters are too aware of the Collingwood and Carlton experience to accept such affirmations without question.

The question is how many supporters were turned away by the rain?

Are we expecting too much from Power - has the emergence of one 'mainstream' club, Spirit, satisfied the needs of the latent football support that existed out there for so many years? Are there thousands still out there that will support another similar club in the same sort of numbers as Spirit is getting?

Brad Levy, the Power CEO, and



Joel Griffiths (left) and Kim Pan-Keun of Marconi.

other members of the administration believe that the rain did have a severe impact on the size of the crowd. Levy expected between 15,000 and 20,000, a figure many of us had hoped would be attainable.

We wanted that record to fall, not because we didn't want Spirit to have it but because it would be proof that football was finally achieving its potential.

Alas, it was not to be!

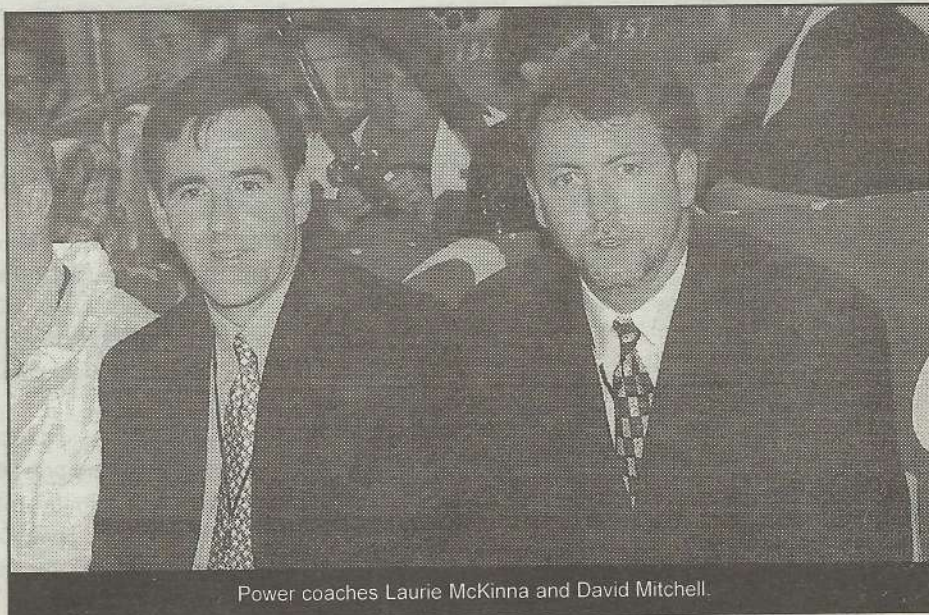
Now the question is will the fans come this week? Due to the unavailability of Parramatta Stadium for this week's home game (it was booked for a

special event a year ago), Power has taken a huge, and expensive, gamble of playing their second home game at the 110,000 capacity Stadium Australia.

Let us hope that the weather is kind and that a record crowd is achieved, at the second attempt, for the sake of football.



David Aceski shows his catching ability on Friday night at Power.



Power coaches Laurie McKinna and David Mitchell.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

ACT Academy of Sport 4
Sydney United Colts 3

On a wet night which made the Bruce Stadium turf very slippery the ACT Academy of Sport and Sydney United Colts opened the 1999/2000 NYL season with a fine exhibition of exciting, attacking football.

Both teams played a bright style and, despite the elements, put on a great display for the crowd building up for the Canberra Cosmos v Adelaide Force game.

After 10 minutes, ACTAS defender Aidan Griffiths had reason to curse the treacherous turf, as a deceptive cross from the left skidded off Griffiths' upraised foot and into the goal to give Sydney United Colts a 1-0 lead. Two minutes later the Academy got their own back; Amied Shadmaan swung a long ball into the United penalty area - it bounced just in front of the keeper, Ben Xerri, who could not gather it properly and alert Daniel Aliffi equalised for the Academy. Brett Townley-Jones then forced ACTAS keeper, Rade Kosanovic, into a good save from a long-range effort, while Stephen Kemp brought the best out of Xerri with another shot from outside the box. In the 21st minute a clever free kick from Yosef Zamora found Paul Ivanic, but he headed over the Sydney United goal. United's Frank Iorfino went one better when he was on the spot following a smart free-kick from Greg McDermott, and smashed the ball past the ACTAS defenders to give Sydney United a 2-1 lead going in to the half-time break. The second half was only nine minutes old when Sydney United Colts were reduced to ten men, following the send-off of Joe Iorfino. Twice in two minutes Iorfino earned the displeasure of the referee, Phil Grabham, for dangerous tackles and was dismissed from the field. From the free kick, which came as a result of Iorfino's second late tackle, Ivanic sent the ball sailing over the bar.

Sydney United kept the ACTAS out until the 69th minute, when a delightful move beginning with Adam Williams and Ivanic was finished clinically by Daniel Aliffi, to give the Academy their equaliser. Aliffi very nearly completed his hat-trick two minutes later but his powerful shot was well saved by Xerri.

The Academy then let United Colts back into the game when ACTAS captain, Dom Labutte, brought down an opponent, and Greg McDermott dispatched the penalty with great force for the fifth goal of the day. Academy's equaliser came in the 75th minute of the game when, fol-

lowing a corner, Phil Yarnold made up for fellow defender Labutte's indiscipline by firing the ball in from close range. The winning goal was scored fittingly by ACTAS' Griffiths whose commitment and strength enabled him to stab the ball home, and thus cancel out the own goal he had scored right at the start of the game.

For the last fifteen minutes of the game Sydney United tried hard but could not break down the ACTAS defence, and in fact ACTAS could have increased their lead when Griffiths swung across a swirling centre and Williams could not quite steer the cross into the Sydney United net.

Teams:

ACT Academy of Sport: Rade Kosanovic, Amied Shadmaan, Aidan Griffiths, Dom Labutte, Phil Yarnold, Stephen Kemp, Yosef Zamora (Matt Jullienne), Rowan Coleman (Brad Smith), Daniel Aliffi, Adam Williams, Paul Ivanic (Goran Veljanovski). Subs not used: Andrew Aliffi, Stephen Craig.

Sydney United Colts: Ben Xerri, Greg McDermott (YC), Brett Townley-Jones, Michael Cindric, Stephen Susic, Joe Iorfino, Daniel Willoughby, Michael Pearson (David Gardner) (Tommy Baric), Mathew Clewes (Tim Falzon), John Turco, Frank Iorfino (YC, YC, RC). Subs not used: Chad Lewis, Marco Batdaric, Mende Gelevski.

Australian Institute of Sport 3
Wollongong Colts 1

Canberra's other team the AIS started the defence of their National Youth League crown with a battling 3-1 win over Wollongong City's colts team on Saturday afternoon at Brandon Park.

Only one goal was scored in the first half by the AIS's Elias Demourtzidis.

The second half saw goals by Wayne Srhoj and Kevo Gullersarian for the AIS and the single goal for Wollongong by first grade player Chad Gibson.

The match also saw the competition return of Wollongong player Christian Zelvis after having his leg broken touring with the Australian Schoolboys side to Fiji in January.

The AIS were without several of their players due to injury and will obviously be looking at improving over the next few weeks.

In other games the newly formed Parramatta Power got their club off to a dream start with a comprehensive 6-0 win over the usually strong Marconi Stallions Youth team.

Daniel Kukucka, the only youth player to join the Power from Sydney United, was the star of the night scoring three goals and looks set to put pressure on the three senior strikers in the Power squad as the season unfolds.

The Queensland Academy also got off to a brilliant start when it slaughtered Sydney Olympic's Academy team to the tune of eight goals to two.

Prolific goal scorer Russell Miner was in the mood putting away three goals as well.

The Queenslanders went on a goal scoring rampage just before half time when they put five past the Olympic goalkeeper within the space of eleven minutes.

Wollongong Wolves had more difficulty than expected against a valiant Newcastle Breakers Colts team - earning a hard fought 2-0 victory.

Both goals were scored late in the game with Rodriguez scoring in the 70th minute and first team fringe player Sasha Dimoski adding the second in the 80th minute.

Sydney Olympic had an equally difficult time against Newcastle Breakers prevailing to the tune of 1-0 after an early Pisano goal in the 14th minute.

The Northern Spirit Colts and Marconi Colts game was postponed while the senior Spirit Youth team played against Sydney United on the Monday.



Daniel Kukucka ... started the season with a hat-trick

NYL Northern Division Round 1 Results

Parramatta Power	6	Marconi Stallions	0
A.C.T.A.S.	4	Sydney United Colts	3
Aliffi 11, 65		Clowes 9	
Yarnold 71		Iorfino 26	
Griffiths 74		McDermott 68	
Wollongong Colts	1	A.I.S.	3
Gibson		Demourtzidis	
		Srhoj	
		Gullersarian	
Sydney Olympic	1	Newcastle Breakers	0
Pisano 14			
Wollongong Wolves	2	Newcastle Colts	0
Rodriguez 73			
Dimoski 80			
S. Olympic Acad	2	Q.A.S.	8
Jaganjac 52		Webber 33	
Samonikas 68		Smith 38	
		Drake 43	
		McKain 44	
		Miner 44, 65, 86	

Marconi Stallions Colts v Northern Spirit Colts
(Postponed)



Ryan Griffiths of Northern Spirit

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Q.A.S	1	1	0	0	8	2	3	6
Parramatta Power	1	1	0	0	6	0	3	6
A.I.S.	1	1	0	0	3	1	3	2
Wollongong Wolves	1	1	0	0	2	0	3	2
A.C.T.A.S	1	1	1	0	4	3	0	1
Sydney Olympic	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
N.S.W.I.S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Spirit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sydney United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marconi Colts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Spirit Colts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newcastle Breakers	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	-1
Sydney United Colts	1	0	0	1	3	4	0	-1
Newcastle Colts	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	-2
Wollongong Colts	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	-2
Marconi Stallions	1	0	0	1	0	6	0	-6
Syd Olympic Acad	1	0	0	1	2	8	0	-6

AURELIO TOPS THE CHARTS

Greg Blake's 25 best off-season buys

It's a case of right city, right place and time. That is why I rank Aurelio Vidmar's return to newly-renamed Adelaide Force as the number one transfer coup of the close-season.

Parramatta Power has fussed for Sydney United's gold nuggets and several other top guns have switched clubs or states in the off-season, but Vidmar's return to South Australia is as timely as it is critical for both club and struggling soccer city.



Alvin Ceccoli. Blakey rates the Wolves man at number 12

It sounds like a promo grab for a Clint Eastwood blockbuster, but for a town desperately in need of heroes Vidmar's return is a shot in the arm.

The collapse of the crosstown Sharks has sent a shockwave through Adelaide's soccer fraternity and while Adelaide City has been, in terms of finals and grand final appearances, the club of the 1990s, there is no guarantee that the re-named Zebras can continue the tradition.

Vidmar might be in the veteran category now but his return to a rebuilding Adelaide club chasing its 11th consecutive play-off berth is vital.

Classy footballer as he is, Soccerroo Vidmar is also a charismatic, high-profile sportsperson in his own right and to re-sell the game in ailing Adelaide, his presence can only help reinvigorate soccer's status.

It's not just a case of who moved where, but to rate the close-season moves I've attempted to evaluate not just the talent, but value to overall team structure, club promotion and public relations and, in the case of anticipated overseas

moves, the possible financial potential of players in the market place.

David Seal comes in at number two, his return to Northern Spirit hopefully the icing on a Spirit squad which rode into last year's finals on the back of a tepid offence which ranked equal-tenth in the NSL, alongside the likes of Adelaide Sharks.

As a kid Seal fairly exploded on to the NSL scene at the turn of the decade and his superb strike rate of 58 goals in 103 games (at 0.53 goals per game) puts him ahead of the likes of all-time greats Farina, Mori and Kosmina.

The league is not as strong as it was when Seal disappeared overseas and even if he's only half as effective on return he could still be the horses-for-courses pick-up of 1999/2000.

Mile Sterjovski comes in at number three, the first of half a dozen genuine stars to cross from Sydney United to the Power and one of 16 in total to follow super-coach David Mitchell across to Parramatta.

At 19 the powerhouse goalscoring machine is maybe a season away from being picked up overseas, as is fifth-ranked teammate Joel Griffiths, and both will be handy earners for Power both on the park and as potential big-money transfers.

Rated highly enough to be named as Power's inaugural skipper I've included inspirational Richard Plesa in at number four, along with other United to Power movers Jacob Burns (#10) and underrated Peter Bennett (#21), although several others who have followed the Mitchell bandwagon were stiff to miss.

Kasey Wehrman, a premiership player at 19 with Brisbane,

comes in at number six as he steps up a class with marginal title-favourites Perth Glory for this summer.

Seventh-ranked Ivan Zelic is one of two ex-Canberra youngsters with the chance to strut their stuff with contending sides for a change in 99/2000.

Zelic has reeked of potential since debuting for Olympic a few years back and the 21-year-old, after missing a slab of last season through injury, will learn

plenty under master coach Zoran Matic.

Peter Buljan (#9) is also only 21 but has already scored more goals for Canberra Cosmos than any other player in that club's history.

He could be the story of the season if his form at a relatively crappy team continues with the likely high-flying Perth Glory, where he will get the chance to really stamp a mark.

Dino Mennillo (#8) and Marcus Stergiopoulos (#13) get the nod as Auckland's most important Aussie signings for an otherwise pretty threadbare squad, the latter as much for his qualities as a showman as for his pure footballing abilities.

It will be interesting to see how repatriated Zlatko Arambasic (#11) slots in at Sydney Olympic alongside Pablo Cardozo and his successful return could depend as much on Olympic's form as his own.

Wollongong City struggled with a defence which ranked second-last in goals conceded last year and have tried to address the situation by luring back livewire all-purpose man Alvin Ceccoli (#12) and four time grand final player David Cervinski (#18) to the club.

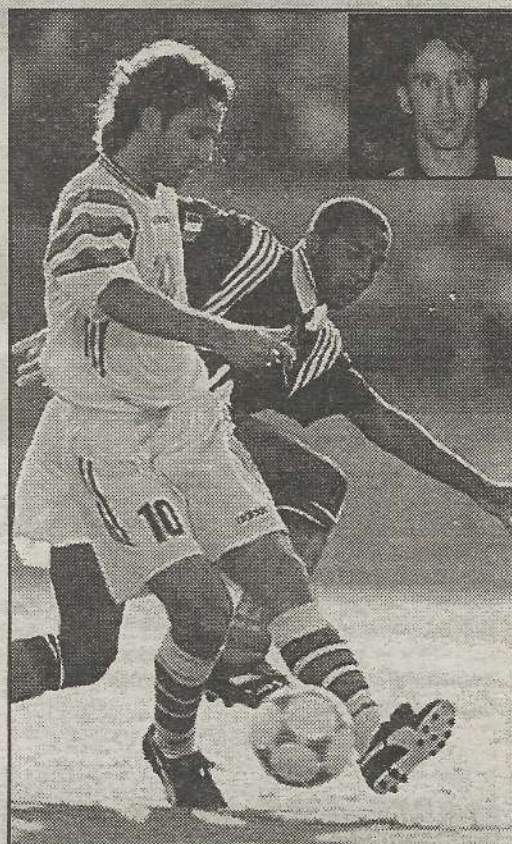
Ceccoli rates very highly, having the ability to jump-start the sometimes timid Wolves by getting forward and scoring goals himself (how could we forget his spectacular debut goal in the Greek League last season.)

In truth Paramatta Power's impressive recruiting campaign could have seen them dominate the rankings, but super proven talents like Milan Blagojevic (#14) and the six-

teenth ranked John Gibson simply couldn't be ignored, while ex-Striker Steve Laybutt (#19) is a handy get.

Carlton's best pick-up is David Terminello (#16), the 19-year-old who played 25 games in his debut season for Adelaide Force last summer, while I couldn't ignore the enigmatic talents of John Markovski (#24), despite an apparent injury cloud on the big fella.

Ante Deak (#17) is one of two



Aurelio Vidmar. Force's Soccerroo is Top of the Pops for off-season NSL transfers says Blakey

Knights to jump ship to savaged Sydney United, along with Tom Pondeljak (#25), and is clearly the pick of the pair on last season's form.

Harry Karl (#20), who showed glimpses in all-too-brief cameo with the Knights last year, could be a sensation for Marconi if he gets the chance, while youngster Anthony Magnacca (#22) is very highly-rated by his new coach at South Melbourne, Ange Postecoglou.

Nathan Day comes in at number 22 after returning to Adelaide from Sydney United.

"Footnote: Inside Soccer's top 25 close-season transfer list has not speculated on 'untried' players, be they highly-regarded overseas imports or local youth stars elevated to senior club list for the new season. That is to say, we have rated only players who have played senior NSL football at some stage in their careers. There are probably one or two notable omissions but we have only included players officially registered by their new clubs according to Soccer Australia records provided to us, dated September 26, 1999.



Harry Karl. comes in at number 20

RANK	PLAYER	FROM/TO			
1	Aurelio Vidmar	Sanfrecce (Japan) to Ad. Force	13	Marcus Stergiopoulos	Carlton to Kingz FC
2	David Seal	Northampton (England) to Spirit	14	Milan Blagojevic	Sydney Olympic to Parra Power
3	Mile Sterjovski	Sydney United to Parra Power	15	David Terminello	Adelaide Force to Carlton
4	Richard Plesa	Sydney United to Parra Power	16	John Gibson	Adelaide Sharks to Power
5	Joel Griffiths	Sydney United to Parra Power	17	Ante Deak	Melb. Knights to Sydney United
6	Kasey Wehrman	Brisbane Strikers to Perth Glory	18	David Cervinski	Carlton to Wollongong Wolves
7	Ivan Zelic	Canberra Cosmos to Adelaide Force	19	Steve Laybutt	Brisbane Strikers to Parra Power
8	Dino Mennillo	Adelaide Force to Kingz FC	20	Harry Karl	Melb. Knights to Marconi
9	Peter Buljan	Canberra Cosmos to Perth Glory	21	Peter Bennett	Sydney United to Parra Power
10	Jacob Burns	Sydney United to Parra Power	22	Nathan Day	Sydney United to Adelaide Force
11	Zlatko Arambasic	Mechelen (Belgium) to Sydney Olympic	23	Anthony Magnacca	Can. Cosmos to South Melbourne
12	Alvin Ceccoli	AEK Athens to Wollongong Wolves	24	John Markovski	Perth Glory to Carlton
			25	Tom Pondeljak	Melb. Knights to Sydney United.

KINGZ' SKY TV DEAL

SKY Television has signed a multi-year agreement with Kingz Football Club to broadcast their games live. "While the process of brokering the broadcast rights has been a lengthy one, we believe we have achieved a wonderful agreement with Sky," said Chris Turner, Chairman of the Kingz.

"It's a multi-layered arrangement that above and beyond carriage includes soccer shows aimed at New Zealand's youth and overall market to increase interest in the Kingz and the code in general."

"We are delighted with the outcome," said Nate Smith, Sky's Chief Executive Officer.

"TV exposure was the only key ingredient the code was missing from a brand perspective. We believe this deal leaves soccer in New Zealand well poised going into the 21st century."

Sky is presently in negotiations to determine who will be its free-to-air broadcast partner.



Kingz' Ivan Vicelich, now New Zealand fans can see their team live on Sky

'Free to Air' coverage will give about 1 million homes the potential to witness the games.

"We think this historic event should be made available to as many New Zealanders as possible," said Nate Smith, SKY's Chief Executive officer, on the first Kingz game against Carlton.

Slater criticizes Tobin's leadership

Today's (Tuesday) launch of Robbie Slater's book 'The Hard Way' has been given extra spice with the revelation that Slater heavily criticizes Alex Tobin in the book.

Slater believes that Tobin did not have the leadership qualities necessary - citing Aurelio Vidmar as an able alternative. He felt that Tobin's decision to stay in Australia was one of the reasons why he was picked by Terry Venables as the skipper of the Socceroos.

The Spirit captain also revealed that the Socceroo pay dispute caused some serious team morale problems, and that he was not publicly supported by Tobin on his stance, despite Slater saying that Tobin privately supported what he believed.

The launch is today at the Spirit home ground. And you can win a copy of this book, just read next week's issue where we hope to have a copy from the publishers to give away to one lucky reader.

Robbie Slater will be signing copies of his book on Thursday, 14 October at Dymock's, 73 Mount St (Pedestrian Mall), North Sydney.

He will be there from 12.30pm for around 45-minutes and as an added bonus, the store will have a T-shirt, cap and scarf for three lucky purchasers whose names are pulled from the hat at the end of the promotion.



Today is the launch of Robbie Slater's book, written with Matthew Hall, called 'The Hard Way'

HAMMERS FANS SHOW THEIR CLASS AT BLACKTOWN



The Cup winners: West Ham Supporters Club.
Back row L-R: George Kormanis, Peter Denyer, Don O'Regan, Dave Hubbard, Paul Nicic, Michael Almond.

Front Row L-R: Tony Wiggins, Joe Givonah, Tony Lozaro, Paul Constantini, Ken Schembri

The Gabbie Stadium, home of the Blacktown City Demons, was awash with claret and blue recently when the final of the British Supporters Club of NSW over 35 soccer tournament was played between the teams of West Ham United and Aston Villa.

The tournament, organised by Michael Almond of the 'ammers Down Under Supporters Club and Ken Schembri of Blacktown City Soccer Club, was a great success with many of the players renewing old acquaintances.

The tournament was split into two

groups with West Ham topping group A (ahead of Liverpool, Millwall and Celtic), while Villa took out group B, ahead of Rangers, Sunderland and Chelsea.

In the semis, the Hammers beat Rangers 1-0 and Villa won 2-1 on penalties against Liverpool after they were locked at 0-0.

In the exciting final the Hammers won 1-0 against Villa after extra time. Tony Lozaro was the hero for the Hammers, scoring the vital winning goal.

With Blacktown's sponsorship deal with West Ham perhaps it was apt that they won in the end.

The Blacktown Referees Association provided the officials on the day, so a big thank you goes out to them.

In the group stages, West Ham finished on seven points in group one, Liverpool six, Millwall two and Celtic one.

Is this a good omen for the Hammers' Premier League aspirations.

In group two, Villa finished on seven, with Rangers also on seven (worse goal diff.), Sunderland on one together with Chelsea also on one point.

who's that playing football?



Australia's cricketing legend and test skipper Steve Waugh warms up with a bit of football against all-rounder Michael Bevan on the Australians' tour of Sri Lanka. Waugh was a quality player in his younger days but chose cricket ahead of the World Game

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THE DEVIL INSIDE

By Aidan Ormond

David Clarkson, South Melbourne's affable yet tigerish Tasmanian midfielder, was having a good laugh with his friend and teammate Paul Trimboli. Now they have qualified for the World Club Championship they joked that they would send Sir Alex Ferguson a video of South playing against Nandi - complete with frogs on the sandy pitch in Fiji - just to let the Manchester United boss know how South qualified for the Cup.

There were no frogs in Wollongong last Sunday as South began their shot at an historic third in a row championship title, yet the memory of winning the WCC qualifiers in Fiji has not faded. I wondered whether Clarkson thought it possible that any future NSL winner could lose in such a qualifying tournament?



Off the field sees Clarkson's gentler side. Here he is performing his role as South's Youth Development Officer.

"I would have said before the tournament, no. But now, I would say yes," he said firmly. "It's the grounds, the refereeing, the dressing rooms, the conditions, basically everything. The whole thing is geared to evening up the competition between them and us - even the Kiwis struggled in those conditions."

The first game of the tournament, however, proved as difficult as any South has had in recent times. They just got over Malaita Eagles (Solomon Islands) 2-1,

after going behind just after the break. "In the first game we nearly blew it, we were trying to play football when the pitch was so poor you had to adapt your game to the hard pitch and the bounce of the ball. The ball was just being kicked from end to end."

"I think there is politics involved in the decision to play it over there. Having said that it is nice to be Oceania Champions and have the medal to prove it."

"When the final whistle went against Nandi in the final (they won 5-1) it was pure relief, because if we hadn't got through it would have been a tragedy for our supporters, club and the league."

"I was rooming with Trimmers (Paul Trimboli) and we were saying, 'imagine if Nandi got through instead of us, Man Utd would beat them 50-0!'"

And Fiji may be a popular tourist destination but the trip was anything but a holiday for South. "Ange (Postecoglou) was

wary of us being in the sun too much (they had just come from a Melbourne winter), so we didn't see much of the island. One day we went out on a boat but we more or less stayed in our hotel, which was pretty nice anyway."

"It is good to get away," he says of the bonding aspect of such trips. "We have good characters in the team and these tours give you a chance to get to know your teammates a bit better."

This is an aspect that Postecoglou now has firmly entrenched in the South camp; a collection of players that give their heart and soul to the team, and are of decent character. Hence the signing of players with less 'star quality' (Magnacca, Alagich, Udvaracz) than perhaps was expected of the cashed up club from Lakeside.

"He's big on attitude," says Clarkson of his coach.

The side returned from Fiji while the storm (pardon the pun) over Victoria's

NRL side's victory, and North Melbourne's in the AFL, was at its peak in the Melbourne media. Yet Clarkson believes the local media has given South a reasonable run. "It's hard because AFL is number one down here. Mind you, we did get the front page of the Herald Sun the other day. I think," he says thoughtfully, "that we need to get out more to the non-ethnic communities in order to boost our profile."

In that vein, Clarkson has been appointed the club's youth development officer. It's a role he clearly relishes and, it gives the urbane and marketable 'Clarky' the opportunity to spread the soccer message to the wider community.

As for motivation for this NSL season, Clarkson (who has signed for two more years) is adamant that winning in Fiji was the best thing for them. "Imagine," he said, "if we hadn't won in Fiji. What would our motivation been like for the NSL?"

Speaking of the NSL, South's mid-field workhorse is firm in his belief that the league's numbers need to be reduced, and soon. "I just think 17 and 16 teams in the league is too much. You can see even at the state league level, they are losing players to the national league, so their standard is falling too."

"We need to reduce the numbers in our league so the best players end up in a smaller number of clubs. I do however support the inclusion of the new teams from Auckland and Parramatta."

With the WCC, and its qualifiers, plus the expanded NSL and the mooted NSL Cup, the likelihood of an almost 50-game season looms for South. Clarkson is wary that with such a schedule ("it's like being in Europe as a player") can have deleterious effects on the squad's success. "Some quality may start to fade at the business end of the season."

And while he wouldn't be drawn into



On the field David Clarkson is super-competitive and very hard working in the South engine room.

what he preferred: a win over Man Utd or a championship title number three in a row, the prospect of just being on the same field as a Real Madrid, a Vasco de Gama and the Red Devils, is a huge buzz. "Imagine beating, or even drawing with Man Utd?"

"Anything can happen. If you had asked the New Zealand team that Nandi would have beaten them, they would have laughed it off, so I guess we can't be written off."

Only time will tell whether their exertions outside of the bread and butter of the NSL will be their downfall this season. Sadly, given the increased expectations, a finals finish will probably not sate their fanatical supporters. But a result over Man Utd may just be ample compensation.

FOOTNOTE: David Clarkson had a son 13 weeks ago. Congratulations! And his daughters who were involved in that accident before one of the finals games last year are much improved. We wish the children the very best wishes for a complete recovery and our thoughts are with them.

SHANE LYONS SEEKING TO EMULATE HIS FATHER'S SPORTING DEEDS

By Aidan Ormond

Shane Lyons may be the son of Manly's Rugby League great Cliff Lyons, but he has never played a game of their code. Ever! Lyons jnr however was adamant that soccer was always going to be his game, and his father has supported him all the way.

"Actually," said Shane Lyons at Spirit's season launch last week, "I was asked to play for an Aboriginal Rugby League side (he is part Koori), but Dad said no, because I may get injured and ruin my chances at Spirit."

"Dad thinks it's great that I've signed for Northern Spirit."

And Spirit's new left-sided midfielder can't wait to see the famous Spirit Park when it is full. "I haven't seen it yet. I was overseas trialling with another player for nine months last year, but I have heard it is unbelievable."

Lyons, 20, was trialling in Portugal (Benfica) and England (Coventry) last season, where he ended up playing for Nuneaton Borough in the UK.

Originally he was at Canberra

Cosmos and has played for Australia at Schoolboy level in 1997.

"I am keen to show Arnie what I can do. I played a few games in the pre-season cup tournament and hopefully I can nudge my way into the starting line-up."

Spirit's squad has an exotic feel about it, with the part Aboriginal Shane Lyons and Antonio Faria, hailing from East Timor. Ironically, both should be vying for a spot on the left side of the Spirit midfield.

He notes that his biggest thrill was playing with Scotland midfielder Gary McAllister while he was trialling at the Scot's English club Coventry. Now he has Robbie Slater and Ian Crook as his new teammates, ideal preparation for his dream to play in the English Premier League.

Later at the launch Spirit Chairman Remo Nogarotto spoke to the media about the club's plans for this year. "Our marketing budget will be upheld and we have signed a lucrative deal with MIX 106FM."

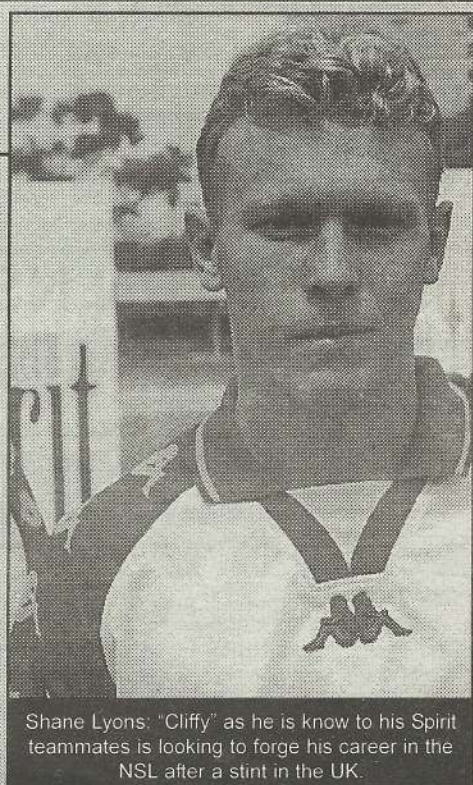
He added that he felt Spirit had woken the soccer ("the sleeping giant of Australian sport), and that the legacy of

his club's massive success in generating interest and crowd support had rubbed off on other clubs, such as Marconi. "We can see significant money being spent by clubs like Marconi, I doubt whether it would have happened if it were not for the entry of Northern Spirit."

The Spirit launch, which featured the players' arrival on the park on the back of Harley Davidsons to the tune of 'The Boys Are Back in Town', provided the large assembled media with good pictures. The squad was then introduced and skipper Robbie Slater, new signing David Seal and player/coach Graham Arnold spoke about the future of the side.

The launch featured on all three Sydney commercial channels, plus SBS. Once again proving that the club knows how to play the media game; that is, give the TV cameras something strong to run with.

This was in sharp contrast to the Soccer Australia launch the following day that was largely devoid of an interesting shot; subsequently only Channel 10 and SBS picked it up. Proof once again that clubs like Spirit and Glory (their launch



Shane Lyons, "Cliffy" as he is known to his Spirit teammates is looking to forge his career in the NSL after a stint in the UK.

was also well covered by commercial TV) know how to play on and off the park.



INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



AUSTRALIA WINS TEST SERIES

The 1999 Trans Tasman Challenge saw the Australian Schoolboys soccer team beat New Zealand on goal aggregate (3-2) to take back the trophy after two hard fought matches last Sunday and Tuesday in Brisbane.

This marks the third time in four years that the Aussies have won the Challenge.

The first match on Sunday afternoon at Perry Park saw the Australian team score a decisive 2-0 win with well taken goals from Marco Iacabaccio and Daniel Dreger. New Zealand were outclassed during this match with the Australian midfield especially dominating their Kiwi rivals.

Score : Australia 2 (Marco Iacabaccio, Daniel Dreger) v New Zealand 0.

Best players for Australia were captain Matt Jullienne, Paul Oberle, Nathan Woodbridge and Dreger.

In the second match, Australia went to the break with a 1-0 score line thanks to a free kick from Jullienne just 4 minutes before half time. New Zealand struck back within 2 minutes of the restart and then again 10 minutes later.

Having used their substitutes due to injury, the Aussies defended well for the last 30 minutes, withstanding waves of attacks, whilst nearly pulling back onto level terms when an 80th minute shot from Dreger narrowly missed.

Score : New Zealand 2 (Wiremu Patrick, Jack Eaton) v Australia 1 (Matt

Jullienne)

Best players for Australia were Luke Morgan, Todd Howarth and Woodbridge.

This team will tour Fiji in January 2000 to play three internationals.

However, Dreger and Paul Brownlee will tour the United Kingdom and Ireland in December with the first XI side.

Speaking to SOCCER OBSERVER on his team's return from Brisbane, New Zealand coach Jacques Vercauteren was satisfied

with his team's overall efforts but not with the entire lead-up prior to the team departing across the Tasman last week.

"Yes, we had four days in Camp, but there's never enough time for prepare for any international series. I was disappointed with the lack of fitness from the some players especially those from the Canterbury contingent, who supplied the nucleus of the midfield and defence. They haven't played any serious football since the NZ Secondary Schools' Tournament, and it showed, especially going into internationals. That was disappointing. They were selected for their skills and we weren't able to appreciate them at their best. Also, we've been suffering from a lack of class in goalkeepers - this is the second successive season. I mean, two of three goals scored were from set-plays whilst another was simply being caught in the wrong position!" said the blunt-speaking Vercauteren. He was also the coach of the NZ U17s when they emerged from the Taiwan tournament before heading to South America to face Argentina with a squad that included both Wynton Rufer and Billy Harris.

Asked about the second international, he said they had changed the formation from the first test where they played 3-5-2, switching to a 3-4-3 so that they could bring Leo Bertos into play. He said the Australians had sent spies out to both their warmup games so they could prepare to stifle our patterned play.

"With an ounce of luck, we could have had five or six goals in that second half against Australia, but part of that was due to the opposition possibly flouting the FIFA rules for interchange of players. They must have used five or six, but we stuck to the two allowed," said a disappointed Vercauteren.

New Zealand Soccer Observer can be found on the Internet @ <http://members.xoom.com/NZsoccer/>

NORTHERN NSW TALENT

Northern NSW were the success story of the recently completed National Talent Identification Championship in the Under 16 age group.

The team won all of its round robin games and conceded only one goal in their four games played while scoring eleven.

Amongst its victories was a 1-0 win over arch rivals NSW.

In their first game in which they beat Queensland 3-1 John Majurovski scored all three goals and he followed that up with two goals in the next game against Northern Territory whom they beat to the tune of 6-0.

The winners of the two round robin groups, Northern NSW and South Australia, both won all their games and were expected to go through to the

final.

But in both semi finals the underdogs finished on top with Northern NSW going down 2-1 to Victoria.

Victoria opened the scoring three minutes into the game and held the lead until twenty minutes from the finish. Tim Sheridan, recently signed with the Newcastle Breakers, provided the NSW team with a well placed header to the far post to equalise.

Victoria scored the winner from a corner five minutes from the end and went on to win the final 3-1 against the NSW side.

For NNSW, who beat South Australia for the third sport, six players were selected in the 32 men train on squad from which 18 will be offered AIS scholarships for the next year.

TALENT IDENTIFICATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

In the National Identification Championships Victoria outplayed NSW in the Under 16's National Talent Identification Championship Final on Saturday at the AIS.

Victoria was leading 1 - 0 at half time in an exciting end to end tussle by the two giants of Australian Youth Football. Although NSW replied in the second half Victoria put two more away in the second half to finish strongly to win 3-1 and be crowned 1999 Champions. Leighal Dellis scored for NSW, while the Vic's scorers were Mark Tsiortas, Ali Kurtdereli and Ricky Chillico.

In the Under 15's NSW are the 1999 National Talent Identification Champions after defeating WA 2-0 in a high quality final at the AIS Soccer Fields.

WA started well - they played some attractive football and creating several early attacking chances, only to be denied by some excellent scrambling defence. NSW got back into the match and took the lead on the half hour when Brett Holman beat the offside trap to finish off a good through ball from captain Michael Brown to establish a 1-0 lead at half time. NSW landed the killer blow immediately after the break when Holman again capitalised on some poor WA defence to find the back of the net. Although no further goals were forthcoming, NSW dominated the midfield while Holman and Matthew Engele created plenty of headaches for the WA defence.

At the conclusion of the Championships a squad of 32 Under 16 players were selected to train at the AIS for this week.

After the week's training the squad will be reduced to 18 players who will be offered scholarships at the AIS with the hope that there will be amongst them a Zelic, Moore or Viduka to carry on the great success of the Canberra institute.

Under 16 Identified Players

STRIKERS: Tim Sheridan NNSW, Matthew Parker CNSW, Mark Tsiortas VIC, Steven Pirone SA, John Majurovski NNSW, Troy Stone CNSW, Mimi Saric SA

MIDFIELD: Franco Parisi NSW, Niall Fay SA, Daniel Rainey VIC, Steven Pace VIC, Peter Gavaghan NSW, Mitchell Johnson NNSW, Ricky Chillico VIC, Joel Grenell VIC, Steve Pantelidis VIC, Narbeth Avanes NSW

WIDE MIDFIELD: Ian Bonato QLD, David Carney NSW, Tallan Martin NSW, Rademir Sekulovski VIC, Brendan Lewandowski QLD

CENTRE BACKS: Matt Rosier NSW, Evan Metanowski SA, Jordan D'Arise SA, Daniel Rocco VIC

SWEEPERS: Craig Metcalf NNSW, Leo Trebbia VIC, Wayne Heath QLD

GOALKEEPERS: Peter Wood NNSW, Adam Hrehoresin VIC, Andrew Carmen SA

A similar selection was made from the Under 15 competition from which will emerge next year's group that will be fighting for a place in the AIS.

Under 15 Selection Camp

ACT: Adrien La Butte, Carl Valeri, Steven Arnott

VIC: Fred Au, Massimo Murdocca, David Puccio, Steven Esposito, Theo Patidis, Michael Edwards

NSW: Jacob Rex, Predrag Bojic, Brett Holman, Michael Brown, Stephen Hallinan, Phillip Weston, Gokhan Ada

QLD: Andrew Byrne, Daniel Varma, Ben Stevens, Sean Walsh

WA: Darren Broxton, Louis Parlinson, Anthony Danze

SA: Adam Van Dommelle, Ben Aldridge, Mario Karlovic, Russell Waller, Fred Agius, Thomas Radford, Terry Smith

TAS: Tom Gordon

NATIONAL TALENT IDENTIFICATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

Under 16	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	P	GD
Group A:									
Northern NSW	4	4	0	0	0	11	1	12	10
NSW	4	3	0	0	1	9	2	9	7
Queensland	4	2	0	0	2	11	6	6	5
West Australia	4	0	1	0	3	2	9	2	-7
North Territory	4	0	1	0	3	2	17	2	-15

Group B:	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	P	GD
South Australia	4	4	0	0	0	7	2	12	5
Victoria	4	3	0	0	1	15	4	9	1
Country NSW	4	2	0	0	2	5	7	6	-2
ACT	4	1	0	0	3	5	9	3	-4
Tasmania	4	0	0	0	4	1	11	0	-10

Under 15	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	P	GD
Group A:									
South Australia	4	3	0	0	1	14	8	9	6
ACT	4	3	0	0	1	7	5	9	2
Victoria	4	2	0	0	2	8	7	6	1
Queensland	4	2	0	0	2	8	8	6	0
Northern NSW	4	0	0	0	4	5	14	0	-9

Group B:	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	P	GD
NSW	4	4	0	0	0	17	3	12	14
West Australia	4	3	0	0	1	20	2	9	18
Country NSW	4	2	0	0	2	8	9	6	-1
Tasmania	4	1	0	0	3	13	12	3	1
North Territory	4	0	0	0	4	0	32	0	-32

Under 16:	VIC 4 v CNSW 1
NSW 3 v WA 1	SA 1 v ACT 0
QLD 1 v NNSW 3	WA 0 v NNSW 1
SA 2 v VIC 1	NSW 2 v QLD 0
TAS 0 v CNSW 2	VIC 6 v ACT 1
	SA 1 v TAS 0
NSW 0 v NNSW 1	WA 1 v NT 1
QLD 6 v NT 1	
SA 3 v CNSW 1	Semi Finals:
TAS 1 v ACT 4	VIC 2 v NNSW 1
	NSW 3 v SA 2
NNSW 6 v NT 0	
VIC 4 v TAS 0	3/4 Place Play-off:
QLD 4 v WA 0	NNSW 3 SA 1
ACT 0 v CNSW 1	
	Final:
NSW 4 v NT 0	VIC 3 NSW 1

Under 15:	WA 7 v TAS 0
	VIC 0 v ACT 2
QLD 1 v VIC 3	
SA 3 v ACT 1	VIC 4 v NNSW 1
WA 1 v NSW 2	QLD 3 v SA 0
CNSW 4 v NT 0	WA 2 v CNSW 0
	NSW 2 v TAS 1
QLD 2 v ACT 3	
SA 7 v NNSW 3	Semi Finals:
WA 10 v NT 0	WA 3 v SA 1
CNSW 3 v TAS 2	NSW 2 v ACT 0
NSW 5 v CNSW 1	3/4 Place Play-off:
ACT 1 v NNSW 0	SA 3 ACT 3
NT 0 v TAS 10	
VIC 1 v SA 3	Final:
QLD 2 v NNSW 1	NSW 2 WA 0
NSW 8 v NT 0	

ANOTHER AUSSIE DEFECTS - SIMUNIC CHOOSES CROATIA



Aussie born Josip Simunic ... Croatia's gain!

By John Vrtaric

UEFA Cup

Josip Simunic, it seems, will be playing in the 2000 Olympics in his home country after all. Recently Olyroo coach Raul Blanco declared that it was too late for Simunic to become involved with the Australian team as he had been injured for over a year.

Simunic's likely appearance at the Olympics will be, unfortunately, for another country - he has been chosen in Croatia's Under 21 team scheduled to play Yugoslavia last night in Zagreb.

If he takes the field for Croatia for any length of time he becomes ineligible to play for any other country, although it is obvious that Simunic has finally chosen which country he wants to play for by accepting the invitation to join the Croatian squad. The Croatians are hot favourites to be one of the European qualifiers for the Olympics - if they do make it Simunic will be joined in the country of his birth by another Aussie, Ante Seric. Now playing for Italy's Verona, Seric has been a regular in the Croatian Under 21 team after playing for the full national team in France 98. Seric made his debut for Croatia, ironically, against Australia.

Champions Cup

Neither Paul Okon nor Frank Juric were part of their team's squad, Fiorentina and Bayer Leverkusen respectively, in the Champions Cup League games.

Mark Bosnich, meanwhile, remained on the bench in Manchester United's 2-1 win over Marseille.

Craig Moore was part of a Rangers defence that kept PSV's Dutch wonder boy Ruud Van Nistelrooy scoreless in a 0-1 Rangers victory - fellow Aussie Tony Vidmar again remained on the bench with Artur Numan fully recovered from injury.

Harry Kewell was replaced in the 85th minute of Leeds' 1-0 win over Yugoslavia's Partisan but missed a great opportunity to score for the third game in a row. Kewell missed an open goal but he was instrumental in providing Darren Huckerby the winning goal when his through ball beat the offside trap.

Josip Skoko played a full game while Tony Grdic came on in the 71st minute in Hajduk Split's 3-0 loss to Bulgaria's Levski - a loss that eliminates them from the competition.

Zeljko Kalac of Roda JC played another full game when it beat Shakhtar Donetsk 1-3 to advance to the next round, whilst Jason Culina was not included in Ajax's squad for its 1-3 win over FC Dukla.

Celtic's Mark Viduka was replaced in the 73rd minute of a 0-2 victory against Israel's Hapoel Tel Aviv but failed to score in this game.

Ross Aloisi, playing for Austrian team Graz, stayed on the pitch for the full ninety minutes in a 2-1 loss, although Graz goes through to the next round 4-2 overall.

Ante Covic played a full game in goals for PAOK Salonika in a 2-0 win over Lokomotive Tbilisi.

English Premier League

Harry Kewell, after a barren start to the season, scored for the third premiership match in a row with a 70th minute speculative shot and played the full game.

The tale of the 'keepers continues with Mark Schwarzer keeping goals for Middlesbrough in a 2-1 loss to Newcastle while Mark Bosnich wasn't in Manchester United's squad as they suffered their first loss of the year in a 5-0 thrashing at the hands of Chelsea. Massimo Taibi was again in goals while Raimond van der Gouw was his deputy - Taibi made another blun-

der for the first goal and seems to be on borrowed time as the first choice 'keeper.

John Aloisi's injury was again responsible for his absence from the Coventry squad in its one-all away draw with Everton.

Scottish Premier League

In Scotland the now ever present Craig Moore played a full game, and received a yellow card, whilst Tony Vidmar replaced Artur Numan in the 55th minute in Rangers' 3-2 away victory over Dundee.

Stuart Lovell was replaced in the 61st minute in Hibernian's 2-0 win at Aberdeen and managed to get himself booked. Mark Viduka's Celtic had the weekend free due to Scotland's mid-week European Cup qualifier.

Nationwide Division One

Kevin Muscat and Steve Corica played full games while Nick Rizzo came on at the start of the 2nd half in the midweek Crystal Palace-Wolves 1-1 draw, but there was still no Craig Foster for Palace.

Rizzo was booked in the 90th minute and Muscat in the

played full games for Pompey.

There was good news for Shaun Murphy who scored a goal in the 49th minute but the opponents scored four as Huddersfield scored a 4-1 win over Murphy's Sheffield United.

Danny Allsop came on in 68th minute for Manchester City in their midweek 1-0 loss at Norwich, but there was no Danny Tiatto in the lineup. In the weekend game Allsop came on in the 34th minute, but did not score, while Tiatto remained on the bench as City beat Port Vale 2-1.

John Filan played a full game for Blackburn Rovers in a mid week 2-1 away loss to Swindon Town for whom Andrew Bernal was not included in team squad - in the weekend game Filan was part of Blackburn's nil-all draw with QPR and received a yellow card.

Stan Lazarides was still absent from Birmingham's 1-0 loss to Charlton for whom Sasha Ilic remained on the bench.

Jason Kearton was Crewe Alexander's custodian in its 0-2 home loss to Tranmere while fellow 'keeper Steve Mautone remained on the bench for Wolverhampton in a 1-1 draw with West Bromwich Albion. In the same game Steve Corica remained on the bench with Mautone while Kevin Muscat played the full game for the Wolves and Jason Van Blerk was replaced in the 65th minute for West Brom.

In Division Two, Tim Cahill played a full game and Lucas Neill was replaced in the 82nd minute in Millwall's 2-0 loss to Gillingham.

Defender Andrew Bernal would not have been happy with Reading's 5-3 loss to Wycombe although he did play a full game. Young 'keeper Tynan Scope was on the bench for Bristol City in a 3-0 loss to Oxford.

Other News

Young Luke Wilkshire's progress has been rewarded with a place in the Middlesbrough's reserve side for the mid week game at Aston Villa. Bryan Robson said of the Aussie teenage midfielder: "I have had very good reports about him, so he deserved his chance."

Watford's reserves played Leicester on Monday and that saw a return to action for Richard Johnson who is on the comeback trail. He had medial ligament damage but has been training recently. The Aussie has been missed and to have him back for the match with Manchester

United in a couple of weeks time would be a hell of a boost for Watford. After trialling with Tottenham as a 16 year-old, midfielder Johnson (from Kurri Kurri, NSW), still only 25, has played over 200 games for Watford since the 91/92 season.

Europe

In Germany David Zdrilic played a full game in SSV Ulm's 1-2 loss to Hamburg for whom Josip Simunic was not included due to his involvement in Croatia's Under 21 game.

According to media reports from Germany, Paul Agostino, of 1860 Munich, broke his hand at training and was likely to miss a few weeks. But the injury did not keep him out of this week's game and after making his season debut last weekend, Agostino came on the 74th minute and scored in the 89th minute in his team's 5-0 thrashing of Arminia Bielefeld. Fellow Aussie Ned Zelic wasn't so lucky and missed the match due to injury.

Ulm remains in second last position while Hamburg is second from top and Munchen is improving after a slow start and now lie in sixth position six points behind leaders Borussia Dortmund. Tony Sekulic was not part of second division FSV Mainz's 2-1 loss to Karlsruher.

In Croatia Ante Milicic made a spectacular debut for his club Rijeka. He came on at the start of the second half and scored in the 64th and 81st minute in his team's 4-1 win over Istra.

In Italy Marco Bresciano, after having scored his first goal for Empoli last weekend, was again included in his team's weekend game in which they were thrashed 6-0 by Vicenza. Vince Grella was amongst the substitutes for Empoli but did not see any action.

Paul Okon made a welcome return to the Fiorentina team when he came on as substitute in the 68th minute of his team's 1-3 home loss to Roma.

Midfielder Josip Skoko was the man of the match in Hajduk's 5-4 win over Osijek - Skoko received an early shower, in the 82nd minute, for his outstanding performance. Tony Grdic was not part of Hajduk's team for this game.

In Holland Zeljko Kalac was Roda's 'keeper in their 1-2 away victory over Utrecht but neither Jason Culina nor Josip Bacak appeared for their respective teams, Ajax and Vitesse.

Kosta Salapispidis wasn't part of Compostela's 2-1 away loss in the Spanish second division.



Empoli's Marco Bresciano

85th - local paper 'The Independent' reported that amid such a flurry of cards it was perhaps inevitable that Muscat should be booked, for a nasty tackle on Dean Austin. "Muzzy's an old favourite of ours," said Palace manager Steve Coppell. "But he seems to be a magnet for incidents. I like him, though. At the end of the game I shook his hand... called him worse than shit, mind you."

Palace's weekend game in which they beat Portsmouth 4-0 didn't feature either of the Australians, while on the other hand both Australians, Andy Petterson and Mike Panapoulos,

BIG GUNS BREEZE THROUGH TO NEXT ROUND

Holders Parma were joined in the UEFA Cup second round by regular league rivals Juventus, Bologna, AS Roma and Udinese on an evening that saw many of the bit-part players complete their roles and leave the stage to more familiar faces. In fact, all 24 clubs from Italy, France, England, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany sides cruised through.

Juventus thrashed Omonia of Cyprus 10-2 on aggregate after scoring five goals in each leg. Yugoslav Darko Kovacevic made a rare start and seized a hat-trick in the match in Palermo.

Roma lost 1-0 to Vitória Setúbal in front of a crowd of 5,000 in Portugal but went through 7-1 on aggregate after the first leg thrashing at the Stadio Olimpico while Udinese defeated Aalborg 2-1 for a 3-1 aggregate success.

Out went the likes of Dukla Banska Bystrica, the Slovaks beaten 9-2 on aggregate by former European Champion Clubs' Cup winners Ajax, while Benfica, more former European champions, seemed to be heading for an early exit after losing 1-0 to Dinamo Bucuresti in Portugal, but escaped with a goal in each half of their 2-0 second leg victory in Romania.

Another former European Champion Clubs' Cup winner Celtic eased through Hapoel Tel-Aviv, with Henrik Larsson's solitary strike giving them a 3-0 aggregate success.

Leeds United, leading 3-1 from the first leg, had little difficulty in progressing to the UEFA Cup second round with a workmanlike 1-0 win over Partizan in the first round return clash at Elland Road.

The Englishmen, currently among the Premier League pace-setters, dominated throughout,

and Darren Huckerby grabbed a deserved winner for them after 55 minutes.

The Yugoslavs never seriously threatened Leeds' goal, and might have lost by an even bigger margin had the home side capitalised on a host of chances.

Striker Paul Kitson, making his first appearance of the season after a lengthy spell out of favour, was one of the heroes for West Ham United as the Londoners cruised to a 3-1 win over Osijek in Croatia, taking the first round tie on a 6-1 aggregate scoreline.

Kitson broke the deadlock for the English side with a fine 27th-minute header which effectively killed the tie. West Ham were pegged back by a 70th-minute equaliser from Stanko Bubalo, but the visitors were not to be denied. Defender Neil Ruddock put them back in front with seven minutes left, and Marc-Vivien Foe added a third in the dying seconds.

Newcastle and Tottenham Hotspur both drew their second legs to go through. Spurs ground out a 0-0 draw with Zimbru in Chisinau.

Spain's Celta de Vigo, who lost their first leg 3-2 away at Switzerland's Lausanne Sports, also survived with a 4-0 home win, thanks to a hat-trick by South African Benni McCarthy. Compatriot Club Atletico de Madrid lost 1-0 to MKE Ankaragucu, while Deportivo La Coruna overturned a 1-0 first-leg deficit to account for Stabæk IF with goals from Jokanovic and Flavio in a 2-0 win. The Spanish clean sweep was completed by Real Mallorca, whose 0-0 draw at home to SK Sigma Olomouc completed a 3-1 aggregate victory.

Monaco's 100th match in the European club competitions saw plenty of goals, the

Frenchmen being held to an entertaining 3-3 draw in Perth by Scottish hosts Saint Johnstone to go through on a 6-3 aggregate scoreline.

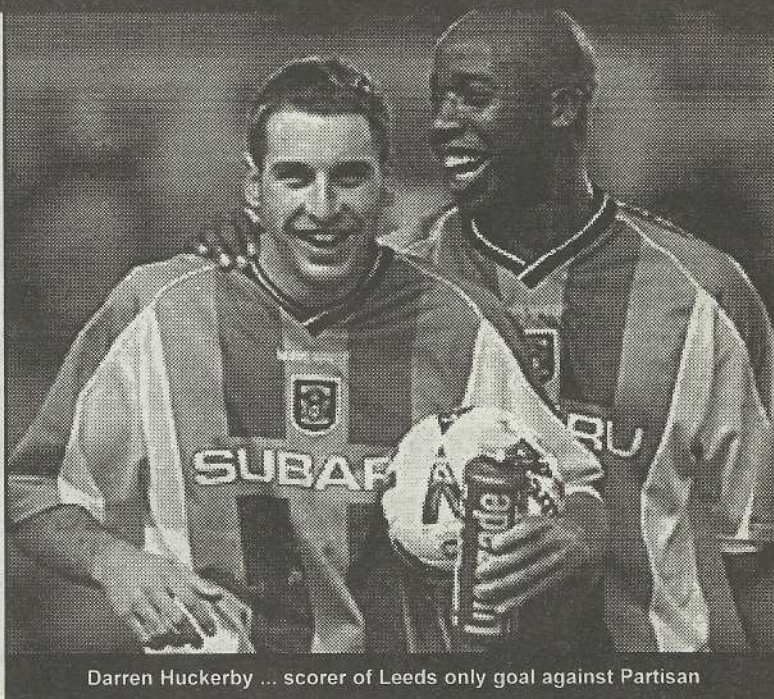
Resting three key players at the start in Marcelo Gallardo, Ludovic Giuly and David Trezeguet, Monaco soon found themselves behind to a sixth-minute own goal by Belgian Philippe Leonard, but pulled level three minutes later through a splendid Dado Prso drive. The Frenchmen went ahead through John Arne Riise after 25 minutes, only for Mick Dasovic to restore parity for the Scots nine minutes later.

In a less intense second half, Sylvain Legwinski gave Monaco a 3-2 lead on the night, but John O'Neil scored a third for Saint Johnstone in the closing stages.

Saint Johnstone's compatriots Kilmarnock fared no better against Kaiserslautern at Rugby Park. The Scots, who lost 3-0 in the opening leg in Germany two weeks ago, conceded two goals midway through the first half, wrecking any realistic chance they had of mounting a comeback.

French World Cup veteran Youri Djorkaeff opened the scoring in the 22nd minute when he beat Colin Meldrum from five metres after Olaf Marschall had robbed Frederic Dindeleux at the by-line and crossed into the area where he found Djorkaeff unmarked. Hani Ramzy then added the second seven minutes later after he was given time and space to fire home after some sloppy marking by the home side following a short corner.

Current Bulgarian league leaders Levski Sofia delighted their home support by advancing to the UEFA Cup second round in some style with a 3-0 home defeat of Croatian side Hajduk



Darren Huckerby ... scorer of Leeds only goal against Partizan

Split.

Levski opened the scoring in the 16th minute when their goalkeeper Dimiter Ivankov converted a penalty after Gueorgui Batchev was taken down by Hajduk 'keeper Stipe Pletikosa. Batchev was on the mark in the 32nd minute to double the Bulgarians lead, and soon after any hopes of a Hajduk revival were dashed when Mate Baturina was dismissed.

Against ten men, Levski's qualification was never seriously threatened and they added a third goal four minutes from time through Gueorgui Gueorguiev.

Nantes made no mistake in their home return leg against Greek rivals Ionikos, the French side following up their 3-1 win in the first encounter with a 1-0 success in front of their own fans. In a disappointing game, Nantes were rarely stretched, and grabbed the only goal three minutes after the interval, Frederic Da Rocha sidefooting Medhi Leroy's cross home from close

range.

Bologna, leading 3-0 from the first leg, failed to produce a similarly convincing performance in front of their own supporters against Zenit St. Petersburg, but progressed to the second round with a 2-2 draw.

The club, which celebrates its 90th anniversary in the coming days, looked set for a comfortable evening's work when Denis Ugarov was sent off for the visitors after only eight minutes, but Klas Ingesson missed the resulting penalty, and the Italians found themselves a goal behind when Alexandre Panov found the target after 34 minutes. Davide Fontolan levelled matters for Bologna four minutes later, and Giacomo Cipriani put the home team in front with 17 minutes left. But the Italians failed to consolidate, and Andrei Kondrashov gave Zenit a deserved draw with a minute left shortly after Ingesson was dismissed.

UEFA CUP RESULTS - ROUND ONE SECOND LEG

Vitoria Setubal 1-0	AS Roma	Ferencváros 1-1	FK Teplice	Olympia Ljub 0-3	Anderlecht	Club Bruges 4-2	Hapoel Haifa 1-0
Makinwa (79)		Matyus, P (58)	Rada (53)	Koller (60)		Verheyen (20)	Rosso (18, 78)
AEK Athens 6-1	Torpedo Kutaisi	Spartak Trnava 2-1	Grazer AK	Radzinski (68, 70)	Partizan	Borkelmans (26)	
Ciric (8 pen)	Mekreladze (72)	Muzli (45, 69)	Standfest (14)	Leeds Utd 1-0		Janssens (53, 63)	
Bjekovic (22)		RC Lens 2-1	Maccabi	Belgrade	Grasshoppers 1-1	Magro (80)	Akademisk B 1-0
Maladenis (25)		Numa (78)	Bassis (25)	Huckerby (55)	Aalborg 1-2		Dauggaard (31)
Kopitsis (43, 88)		Delparte (80)		Zimbru Chisinau 0-0	Matovac (72) Muzzi (56)		Udinese 0-2
Nikolaides (74)		Widzew Lodz 2-0	FC Skonto	Lierse SK 3-4	D Bucharest 0-2		Benfica
Levski Sofia 3-0	Hajduk Split	Wichniarek (1)		Van Meir (16)	Maniche (26)		
Ivankov (38pen)		Gesior (43)	Amica Wronki	Huysegem (70)	Fernandez (72)		
Bachev (32)		Brondby 4-3	Proslowski (53)	Zdebel (81)	O Lonnals 5-1		Helsinki 0-0
Dimitrov (84)		Madsen (37, 58)	Kryszchalowich	Dchamarauli (2)	Andersson (12)		Lekhosuo (38)
Bologna 2-2	St Petersburg	Da Silva (54)		Newcastle	Blanc (15)		
Fontolan (38)	Panov (34)	(64, 69)		Shearer (36)	Linares (18)		
Cipriani (74)	Kondrashov (89)	Colding (82)	Parma	Robinson (88)	Vairelles (69, 85)		
Slavia Prague 3-2	FK Vojvodina	Kryvbas Riga 0-3		Hapoel Tel-Aviv 0-1	NK Osijek 1-3		West Ham (6)
Petrou (50)	Belic (18, 52)	Boghossian (37)		FC Dukla 1-3	Bubalo (70)		Kitson (27)
Dosek, T (75)		Crespo (40)		Malatinsky (44)	Ruddock (83)		
Zelenka (83)		Di Viao (67)	Helsingborg	Robson (64)	Foe (90)		
Lokomotiv Mos 3-0	Lyngby (1)	Karpaty Lviv 1-1	Jonsson (89)	Laudrup (90)	V Arnhem 0-0		Bira Mar 0-0
Kharlachyov (20)		Getsko (90)		Legia Warsaw 2-0	SC de Portu 1-0		Viking FK
Drozdov (43)		Helsingborg win 4-2 on pens		Miecel (47)	Ayew, P (76)		
Dzhanashia (44)		IFK Goteborg 0-0	Lech Poznan	Czereszewski (68)	Saloniki 2-0		Loc Tblisi
Shakhtar Donetsk 1-3	Roda JC	FC Nantes 1-0	Ionikos	Servette 1-2	Valencia (52)		
Beno (36)	Tchuotang (27)	Archi (48)		Lonfat (35)	Salpidigis (87)		
Van der Leur (82)		MKE Ankarag 1-0	Atletico Madrid	Kizeridis (97)	Panathinaikos 2-0		NK Gorica
Van Dessel (89)		Birrol (88)		Fernebach 0-2	Sigurdsson (37)		
Kilmarnock 0-2	Kaiserslautern	Celta de Vigo 4-0	Lausanne	Kenesei (56, 63)	Nasiolopoulos (70)		
Djorkaeff (22)		McCarthy (12, 84, 92)		Werder Brem 1-1	Deportivo 2-0		Stabaek
Ramzy (29)		Mostovoi (75)	Omonia FC	Aliton (76)	Jokanovic (36)		
St Johnstone 3-3	Monaco	Juventus 5-0		Rapid Vienna 1-2	Flavio (63)		
Leonard (5 og)	Prso (9)	Kovasevic (20, 47, 87)		Zingler (65)	Real Mallorca 0-0		Sigma Olomouc
Dasovic (33)	Riise (24)	Tacchinardi (55)		Babnic (64)			
O'Neil (76)	Legwinski (69)	Conte (92)					

ENGLISH TEAMS IN LAST DITCH GOALS

Not quite as dramatic a finale as at the Nou Camp, but Manchester United will not be complaining after yet another trademark comeback with a 2-1 victory over Marseille.

With 12 minutes remaining, United were on course to record their first competitive defeat of 1999 following Ibrahima Bakayoko's shock 41st-minute goal.

It looked like it was going to be one of those nights for United as nothing they tried would come off.

But as manager Sir Alex Ferguson likes to boast, his is a team which does not know the meaning of defeat and just like in the Champions League final against Bayern Munich they never gave up.

They spared their fans the agony of having to wait until stoppage time before scoring and instead they sank Marseille with a double salvo in the 78th and 82nd minutes from Andy Cole and Paul Scholes.

Marseille will be heartbroken, but in the end justice was done after United had largely bossed proceedings from start to finish.

United now top Group D with seven points at the halfway point of the first phase.

Another late show from Arsenal's never-say-die hero Kanu saved a much-deserved point for the Gunners just as they were contemplating their first Champions' League defeat of the campaign.

The towering Nigerian, quiet for most of an absorbing match which Barcelona dominated in the first half but gave way to Arsenal's muscular reprisals in the second, rattled in a 81st-minute equaliser - just seconds after midfielder Gilles Grimandi had been sent off for an elbowing offence.

Arsene Wenger's team emerged from a 45-minute mauling with just one sloppy goal against them and kept their unbeaten record alive against the best team in Group B.

And how they deserved it for a gritty, confident show after the break in a packed Nou Camp.

Arsene Wenger boldly threw on his storm troops again to save the day after Luis Enrique's 16th-minute strike had Arsenal trailing almost sheepishly.

It was Croat Davor Suker, roundly booed by the home fans after his spell at deadly rivals Real Madrid, who forced the comeback.

Arsenal could have folded and settled for a gallant defeat after Frenchman Grimandi was given his

marching orders for aiming an elbow into Barcelona captain Josep Guardiola's face.

But within the blink of an eye, substitute Suker was charging through the middle to fire a shot which goalkeeper Ruud Hesp could only beat out.

And the lurking Kanu did the rest, almost casually notching his fifth goal of the season to make that penalty blunder against Fiorentina three weeks ago seem light years away.

It could hardly have been less convincing but nobody at Stamford Bridge will care about that.

Gianluca Vialli and his Blues looked set to have their Champions League ambitions put into truer perspective as they were given an almighty runaround by a Galatasaray side orchestrated by the old master Gheorghe Hagi.

The Turks, fired up by their pre-game row with Chelsea, had dominated, passing the Blues off their own pitch. But when Brazilian World Cup keeper Claudio Taffarel was rightly sent off for the most clear-cut of handling offences in normal man's land outside his box to prevent Dan Petrescu scoring against the run of play, the entire complexion of the match changed.

Suddenly Chelsea took over and Petrescu's right-wing raiding brought the reward of the vital first goal ten minutes after the break, the Romanian scoring at the second attempt after being set free by Chris Sutton. Few goals have been as important and Vialli's huge smile told how desperately it had been required in the context of the match, Group H, and perhaps the season.

Like no other game, this one was altered by the sending off, and Chelsea will not need reminding of that. Irrespective of the pre-match allegations and dark threats emanating from the Turkish camp, Vialli accepted there could be no excuses for his team if they failed to deliver.

Jorg Albertz, who wasn't even in the starting line-up, grabbed a dramatic late winner to improve Rangers chances of progressing in the Champions League.

The German midfielder, who replaced the injured Claudio Reyna after 24 minutes, made the breakthrough with six minutes to go.

It was just what Rangers needed after losing to Valencia and then drawing with Bayern Munich last week.

No wonder the Rangers manager Dick Advocaat celebrated, for this was a famous victory on the

ground where he had spent four years.

Hertha Berlin aided Chelsea's cause of progressing to the latter stages of the Champions League by holding AC Milan to a 1-1 draw in their Group H game in Italy.

Chelsea's 1-0 win over Galatasaray means the two sides ahead of them now have five points at the top of the group standings, just one point more than Gianluca Vialli's side.

The German team - who beat the Londoners 2-1 last week - mostly devoted themselves to defence to stop Milan's star-forwards Andrei Shevchenko and Oliver Bierhoff.

Yet after surviving three near Milan scrapes, Hertha shocked the home crowd by taking a 1-0 lead in the 69th minute.

Iranian striker Ali Daei controlled a long pass, withstood a tackle by Argentine midfielder Andres Guglielminpietro and scored with an angled left-foot drive.

Bierhoff, fed by Shevchenko, equalised from close range five minutes later.

Rangers were similarly boosted after their win at PSV Eindhoven, with last season's finalists Bayern Munich and Spanish side Valencia also drawing 1-1.

Lopez Gerard's diving header with ten minutes to play helped Valencia to a point in Group F - the two teams remain deadlocked on five points atop the group, with the Scottish champions a further point adrift.

Gerard's goal cancelled out the sixth-minute lead from Brazilian striker Giovane Elber, a goal helped by a glaring goalkeeping error.

Real Madrid, second behind FC Porto before the start of play in Group E, won 3-1 at their Bernabeu Stadium fortress to leapfrog the Portuguese side in the table and give their campaign for an eighth European title a real boost.

It was Fernando Morientes who gave John Toshack's side the perfect start with a 23rd-minute goal, set up by Spanish international team-mate Raul but prolific striker Jardel squared the match for Porto, who won this trophy in 1987, just a minute later after a horrendous bungle by Real keeper Albano Bizarri.

An Ivan Helguera strike eight minutes before the interval put the Spanish side back in front and a Fernando Hierro penalty after 68 minutes calmed the nerves of the fans.

In the other match in that pool



Last minute goal for Arsenal ... Kanu

it was Brazilian Giovanni who inspired Greek champions Olympiakos to a 3-1 victory over Norwegian side Molde.

Giovanni scored twice - fellow Brazilian Luciano was the other scorer for the Greeks - with Andreas Lund scoring the only goal for the Scandinavians.

In Group G Bordeaux beat top dogs Spartak Moscow, who now slump to third in the pool after Sparta Prague spanked Willem II Tilburg, of Holland, 4-0.

After nine minutes Bordeaux's French international striker Wiltord gave the French champions the lead and after Spartak squandered several chances Bordeaux took a 2-0 lead in the 56th minute.

Johan Micoud fed another French international forward Lilian Laslandes who immediately returned the ball to Micoud whose precise header beat Alexander Filimonov in the Russian goal.

Artem Bezrodnyi reduced the arrears for the Russians set up by Yegor Titov, who had sprung the Bordeaux offside trap but the home side held on for a 2-1 victory despite some anxious moments.

Willem II Tilburg are more or less eliminated after the Dutch were drubbed 4-0 by Sparta Prague in the Czech Republic.

First-half goals from Jiri Novotny, Martin Prohaszka and Tomas Rosicky put the home side in the ascendancy before the interval and afterwards Jiri Jarosik made it four.

Arsenal's gritty performance in

Barcelona was capped when Group B rivals Fiorentina could only draw 0-0 away to Swedish outfit AIK Solna.

The Gunners are now three points clear of the Italians in second place, with Barcelona leading the group.

In Group D, Croatia Zagreb closed the gap on Marseille thanks to a comfortable 3-0 home success over Austrian strugglers Sturm Graz.

Goals from Tomislav Sokota and Tomislav Rukavina took Zagreb to four points, two behind the French side.

Lazio needed time to find their goalscoring boots against Slovenians Maribor but four goals in a 16-minute spell in the second half settled the issue 4-0. Sergio Conceicao opened the scoring and then set up Simeon Inzaghi for the second. Marcelo Salas came off the bench to score a brace and complete the demolition.

Their nearest Group A rivals Bayer Leverkusen slipped up when they could only manage a 1-1 draw at home to last year's semi-finalists Dynamo Kiev.

Both matches in Group C ended in stalemate - a late goal from Mauro Silva earned Boavista a 1-1 draw at home to Feyenoord.

Norwegians Rosenborg rallied from two goals down against Borussia Dortmund to peg them back 2-2 with goals from Jan Derek Sorensen and John Carew. The Germans had earlier gone ahead through Sergej Barbarez and veteran defender Jurgen Kohler.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE STANDINGS

Group A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Group E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lazio	3	2	1	0	7	3	7	Real Madrid	3	2	1	0	10	5	7
B Leverkusen	3	1	2	0	4	2	5	Porto	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
NK Maribor	3	1	0	2	1	6	3	Olympiakos	3	1	1	1	6	6	4
Dynamo Kiev	3	0	1	2	2	5	1	Molde	3	0	0	3	2	8	0
Group B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Group F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	3	2	1	0	7	4	7	Valencia	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Arsenal	3	1	2	0	4	2	5	Bayern Munich	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
Fiorentina	3	0	2	1	2	4	2	Rangers	3	1	1	1	2	3	4
AIK Solna	3	0	1	2	2	5	1	PSV Eindhoven	3	0	1	2	2	4	1
Group C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Group G	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	3	1	2	0	7	4	5	Bordeaux	3	2	1	0	5	3	7
B Dortmund	3	1	2	0	6	4	5	Sparta Prague	3	1	2	0	5	1	4
Feyenoord	3	0	3	0	4	4	3	Spartak Moscow	3	1	1	1	5	4	4
Boavista	3	0	1	2	2	7	1	Willem II	3	0	0	3	3	10	0
Group D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Group H	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Manchester Utd	3	2	1	0	5	1	7	Hertha Berlin	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Marseille	3	2	0	1	5	3	6	AC Milan	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Croatia Zagreb	3	1	1	1	4	2	4	Chelsea	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Sturm Graz	3	0	0	3	0	8	0	Galatasaray	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RESULTS

Bayer Leverkusen 1	Dynamo Kiev 1	Giovanni 16, 70	Lund 58
Kirsten 52	Husin 71	Luciano 77	
Lazio 4	NK Maribor Testanic 0	Real Madrid 3	FC Porto 1
Inzaghi 61		Helguera 37	Morientes 23
Conceicao 62		Hierro pen 68	
Salas 71, 76		Jardel 24	
AIK Solna 0	Fiorentina 0	Bayern Munich 1	Valencia 1
Barcelona 1	Arsenal 1	Elber 6	Segu Gerard 80
Luis Enrique 16	Kanu 81	PSV 0	Rangers 1
Group C	Group F	Group G	Group H
Boavista 1	Feyenoord 1	Bordeaux 2	Hertha Berlin 1
Silva 87	Bosvelt 62	Wiltord 9	Daei 69
Rosenborg Trondheim 2	Borussia Dortmund 2	Micoud 56	Galatasaray 0
Derek Sorensen 35	Barbarez 12	Sparta Prague 4	
Carew 68	Kohler 22	Novotny 26	
Croatia Zagreb 3	SK Sturm Graz 0	Prohaszka 29	
Rukavina 28		Rosicky 40	
Sokota 34, 57		Jarosik 58	
Man Utd 2	Marseille 1	AC Milan 1	
Cole 79	Bakayoko 41	Bierhoff 74	
Scholes 83	Molde 1	Chelsea 1	
Olympiakos 3		Petrescu 55	

MANCHESTER DEMOLISHED BY CHELSEA



Alan Shearer ... another two goals

Leeds claimed top spot in the Premiership after recovering from a goal down to beat Watford 2-1 at Vicarage Road.

After a quiet opening Watford took the lead through Mark Williams just three minutes from half-time after Leeds had been temporarily reduced to 10 men when skipper Lucas Radebe was stretched off.

Peter Kennedy's free-kick was deflected into the path of Williams who turned and powered a shot past Nigel Martyn.

But Leeds made a fast response as Michael Bridges cut in from the left and fired home superbly - his seventh league goal of the season - to level matters at the interval.

And with that incentive of top spot, Leeds found a winning goal with just 20 minutes left as Harry Kewell's speculative shot swerved past Alec Chamberlain.

Leeds' victory put them on top with 22 points - one point ahead of Manchester United who at that stage were still in action against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge.

But with United slumping to a sensational 5-0 defeat it was confirmed that Leeds finished the day as Premiership leaders.

The mercurial Paolo Di Canio gave West Ham an impressive 2-1 victory against Arsenal in their London derby at Upton Park.

Some fancy footwork by Di Canio created the opening for the first and with a little help from Trevor Sinclair and Paulo Wanchope the Italian finished off his own good work to put the Hammers 1-0 up after 29 minutes.

And another class finish when he turned Martin Keown inside out doubled the lead with 18 minutes left.

But Arsenal, who have a tremendous record at Upton Park, hit back with 13 minutes remaining through Davor Suker.

However, their hopes of completing the comeback were hit when Patrick Vieira was sent off soon after.

And even though West Ham were also reduced to 10 men when Marc-Vivien Foe was red carded, Harry Redknapp's side held out for an excellent victory.

Alan Shearer blasted two first half goals to give Newcastle a 2-1 victory in their north-east derby with Middlesbrough.

Shearer grabbed his 50th goal in the Premiership for the Magpies with a superb header from a great right-wing cross from Warren Barton in the 17th minute.

And he made it 13 goals in eight games with another header just before the break - this time from Nolberto Solano's cross - to make it 2-0 and reward Newcastle's total first-half dominance.

Shearer, whose brace put him level with Sunderland's Kevin Phillips on 10 league goals, had earlier been involved in an incident with Gary Pallister when the Middlesbrough defender was stretched off after the two collided.

The Magpies looked to be coasting towards victory but Brian Deane pulled a goal back in the 89th minute to give Newcastle a scare. But it proved too little too late.

Leicester came from 2-1 down at half-time against Spurs to score a 3-2 triumph at White Hart Lane.

Muzzy Izzet's hotstreak continued as the midfielder fired home from the spot to give Leicester a 25th minute lead but Steffen Iversen pulled the hosts level within a minute.

And the Norwegian continued his fine form this season to put Spurs ahead in the 35th minute with a tap-in after Chris Armstrong's header from a David Ginola cross was blocked on the line by Tim Flowers.

But the prolific Izzet pulled Leicester level again when he headed in a fine left-wing cross from Steve Guppy in the 69th minute.

And in a topsy-turvy contest Gerry Taggart gave Leicester the lead again in the 76th minute with a crisp left-foot strike and the Foxes held on this time to move up to seventh.

Sunderland moved into second place in the Premiership - their highest position for 20

years - thanks to a 4-0 victory over fellow new-boys Bradford at Valley Parade.

Alex Rae repaid the faith shown in him by manager Peter Reid as he fired Sunderland into the lead.

Rae, recalled by Reid after an impressive second-half performance in last week's win over Wednesday, netted in the 17th minute, after top scorer Kevin Phillips had capitalised on defensive hesitancy.

And the Wearersiders went 2-0 ahead when Rae turned provider by setting up Niall Quinn to head home on 68 minutes.

The points were made completely safe when Kevin Phillips grabbed two goals in the last two minutes, the second a penalty.

Phillips is now the Premiership's equal top scorer with 10 goals, and the Wearersiders' fourth successive Premiership win moves them to within a point of second placed Manchester and only two points behind leaders Leeds.

At the other end of the table Sheffield Wednesday grabbed their first Premiership victory of the season with an emphatic 5-1 success at home to Wimbledon.

Dutch international Wim Jonk, starting his first game since August 25 after missing the last five weeks with an ankle problem, notched after nine minutes at Hillsborough.

Petter Rudi's pass sent Gilles de Bilde sprinting away down the right and after his cross was drilled home by Jonk.

Although John Hartson levelled with a deflected 14th-minute shot, de Bilde restored Wednesday's lead nine minutes later following good work by Jonk as Wednesday - who had managed just three top flight goals all season prior to kick-off - took control.

Rudi made it 3-1 midway through the second half and de Bilde notched his second before Gerald Sibon struck a fifth for the Owls in the last minute.

But Wednesday still remain bottom of the table, level on points with Newcastle who hammered them 8-0 last month.

Steve Staunton was sent off by referee Rob Harris as Aston Villa and Liverpool played out a goalless draw at Villa Park.

Former Villa defender Staunton was dismissed 31 minutes into the game - the third Liverpool player to see red this week.

Staunton, who finished Monday's Merseyside derby in goal after Reds keeper Sander Westerveld was sent off, was booked early on for bringing down George Boateng and then received his marching orders for encroaching at a free-kick.

There were also a flurry of yellow cards throughout the game but goals proved more elusive with Villa unable to make their numerical advantage pay dividends although they did

have the ball in the net in the second half through Dion Dublin, but the effort was ruled out for offside.

In the other top flight game at Goodison Park Francis Jeffers gave Everton a dream start before they had to settle for a 1-1 draw against Coventry.

Jeffers - dismissed in Monday's Merseyside derby success at Anfield - netted after just two minutes to give September's Carling Manager of the Month Walter Smith a further lift.

But Gary McAllister scored in this clash for the second successive season to put the Sky Blues back on level terms, firing into an unguarded net from 30 yards after keeper Paul Gerrard had blocked at the feet of Robbie Keane.

Argentinian striker Gabriel Amato grabbed a dramatic late winner for Rangers as they beat Dundee 3-2 at Dens Park to preserve their 100% Premier League record.

But Dundee gave them more of a game than PSV Eindhoven in midweek in the Champions' League.

The game was not without controversy, with Lee Wilkie of the home side and Rangers midfielder Giovanni van Bronckhorst both dismissed four minutes before the break.

Dundee fought hard and were within 21 minutes of a famous victory after goals from Shaun McSkimming and Willie Falconer had put them 2-1 ahead after Andrei Kanchelskis' opener for the Gers.

Rangers showed their class though as Rod Wallace (80) and Amato (84) brought them victory.

The only other game saw Aberdeen gain their first point of the season with a thrilling 2-2 draw at home to Hibernian.

The Dons took the lead deservedly after 58 minutes via Eoin Jess and they held the advantage until eight minutes from time.

Substitute Steve Crawford saw his shot touched onto the post by keeper David Preece before Mixu Paatelainen followed up to send the visiting fans wild.

However, in a dramatic last five minutes, the Dons took the lead for a second time when substitute Ricky Gillies latched on to Robbie Winters' cross to power home a stunning header.

But just as Aberdeen were preparing to celebrate their first win under Ebbe Skovdahl, the visitors again stunned the home side when Mathias Jack stabbed the ball home through a ruck of players to give the sides a point each.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Aston Villa (0) 0 Liverpool (0) 0
Aston Villa: Enckelman, Delaney, Southgate, Ehiogu, Barry, Boateng (Merson 67), Taylor, Hendrie (Stone 80), Thompson, Dublin, Joachim.
Liverpool: Westerveld, Song, Hyypia, Henchoz, Staunton, Smicer (Gerrard 32), Hamann (Carragher 76), Redknapp, Berger, Meijer, Owen (Camara 81).
Sent Off: Staunton (31).
Att: 39,217

Bradford (0) 0 Sunderland (1) 4
Bradford: Walsh, Halls, Wetherall, O'Brien, Myers, Blake, McCall, Windass, Beagrie, Mills, Saunders.
Sunderland: Sorensen, Makin, Bould, Butler, Gray, Summerbee, Rae (Williams 73), McCann (Roy 61), Schwarz, Quinn (Dichio 86), Phillips.
Goals: Rae 17, Quinn 68, Phillips 88, 90 pen.
Att: 18,204

Everton (1) 1 Coventry (1) 1
Everton: Gerrard, Gough, Weir, Dunne (Gammill 84), Ball, Bamby (Cadamarteri 45), Collins, Hutchison, Xavier, Campbell, Jeffers.
Goals: Jeffers 2.
Coventry: Hedman, Edworthy, Shaw, Konjic (Williams 57), Keane, Palmer, Chippo, McAllister, Telfer, Hall, Hadji.
Goals: McAllister 11.
Att: 34,839

Sheff Wed (2) 5 Wimbledon (1) 1
Sheff Wed: Srnicek, Atherton, Thome, Walker, Nolan, Rudi, Alexandersson, Jonk, Sonner (Donnelly 84), Booth (Sibon 88), De Bilde.
Goals: Jonk 9, De Bilde 23, Rudi 70, De Bilde 82, Sibon 90.
Wimbledon: Sullivan, Cunningham, Thatcher, Blackwell, Andersen (Kimble 35), Roberts (Leaburn 74), Badir (Earle 56), Euell, Gayle, Cori, Hartson.
Goals: Hartson 14.
Att: 18,077

Chelsea (2) 5 Man Utd (0) 0
Chelsea: De Goey, Ferrer, Hogg, Leboeuf, Babayaro, Petrescu (Le Saux 77), Wise (Morris 65), Deschamps, Poyet, Sutton, Zola (Flo 69).
Goals: Poyet 1, Sutton 16, Poyet 54, Berg 59 og, Morris 81.
Man Utd: Taibi, Irwin, Berg, Stam, Silvestre, Beckham (Solskjaer 65), Butt, Scholes (Sheringham 65), Neville, Yorke, Cole (Wilson 65).
Att: 34,909

Newcastle (2) 2 Middlesbrough (0) 1
Newcastle: Harper, Barton, Dabizas, Goma, Domi, Dyer, Lee, Speed, Solano (Glass 88), Shearer, Gallacher (Robinson 83).
Goals: Shearer 17, 44.
Middlesbrough: Schwarzer, Fleming, Festa, Pallister (Vickers 9), Cooper, Ziege, Mustoe, Ince, O'Neill, Deane, Juninho (Campbell 45).
Goals: Deane 89.
Att: 36,421

Tottenham (2) 2 Leicester (1) 3
Tottenham: Walker, Carr, Perry, Young (Vega 72), Taricco, Leonhardsen, Sherwood, Freund, Ginola (Nielsen 71), Iversen, Armstrong.
Goals: Iversen 26, 35.
Leicester: Flowers, Gilchrist (Marshall 67), Elliott, Taggart, Impey, Savage, Lennon, Izzet, Guppy, Heskey, Cottee.
Goals: Izzet 25 pen, 69, Taggart 76.
Att: 35,591

Watford (1) 1 Leeds (1) 2
Watford: Chamberlain, Lytle (Gibbs 45), Page, Williams, Robinson, Hyde, Palmer, Kennedy (Easton 80), Ngongue, Foley (Miller 69), Wooter.
Goals: Williams 42.
Leeds: Martyn, Kelly, Batty, Woodgate, Harte, Radebe (Mills 42), Bakke, Hopkin (Haaland 86), Kewell, Bridges (Huckerby 69), Smith.
Goals: Bridges 45, Kewell 70.
Att: 19,677

West Ham (1) 2 Arsenal (0) 1
West Ham: Hislop, Potts, Ruddock, Stimac, Sinclair, Lomas, Lampard, Foe, Moncur (Margas 87), Di Canio, Wanchope (Kitson 80).
Goals: Di Canio 29, 72.
Arsenal: Seaman, Luzhny (Overmars 72), Keown, Adams, Silvinho, Henry (Kanu 72), Vieira, Grimandi, Ljungberg, Suker, Bergkamp.
Goals: Suker 77.
Att: 26,009

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Aberdeen (0) 2 Hibernian (0) 2
Aberdeen: Preece, Perry, Anderson (Lilley 50), Solberg, Dow, Young (Gillies 82), Buchan, Mayer, McAllister (Winters 70), Hamilton, Jess.
Goals: Jess 58, Gillies 85.
Hibernian: Gottskalksson, Collins, Dennis, Lovell (Miller 61), Renwick, Jack, Dempsey, Brebner, Latapy (McGinlay 82), Paatelainen, Hartley (Crawford 72).
Subs Not Used: Coigan, Lehmann.
Att: 11,876

Dundee (0) 2 Rangers (1) 3
Dundee: Douglas, Smith, Maddison, Tweed, Boyack (Sharp 88), Rae, Annand (Grady 38), Falconer (Matute 82), McSkimming, Van Eijs, Wilkie.
Sent Off: Wilkie (41).
Goals: McSkimming 56, Falconer 69.
Rangers: Charbonnier, Porrini (Amato 71), Moore, Amoroso, Numan (Vidmar 55), Kanchelskis (Adamczuk 76), Ferguson, Van Bronckhorst, Albertz, Moles, Wallace.
Goals: Kanchelskis 29, Wallace 80, Amato 84.
Att: 10,494

OUR STAR WOMEN INVITED TO USA

Matildas superstars Julie Murray and Sarah Cooper have been invited to play in a cashed up indoor tournament in the US.

The two Aussie stars of our disappointing World Cup campaign will leave on October 22 and will return in November.

The tournament is a made for TV special event designed to cash in on the huge interest the Women's World Cup, and in particular the US national team, has engendered since the July Cup was won in sensational circumstances by Brandi Chastain's penalty in the Final.

Meanwhile in local women's soccer, Northern NSW Pride defeated ACTAS Canberra Eclipse 3-1 in their round two Ansett Summer Series game at the Jack McLaughlan Oval in NNSW.

Alison Forman showed her 'Forman Material' with a headed goal in the 22nd minute to put the locals ahead 1-0.

The first half blitz continued when the talented Amber Neilson scored from inside the penalty area.

Then Sunni Hughes (the former overseas-based player) made it three for



Matildas superstar Julie Murray. Has been invited back to the USA for a TV tournament.

NNSW, after terrific lead up work from the hard-working Jodie Randall.

ACT scored to make it 3-1 in the second half after Kim Channing and Katrina Staniforth worked a one-two down the right, the latter crossing to Amanda Butler who scored past Northern keeper Jenny Praszczalek.

NNSW coach Mark Jones said later that he wished there were more goals.

"I think you can go out in the second half reasonably confident of a result when you are leading three-nil. It would have been nice to score a couple more goals."

NNSW PRIDE: Jenny Praszczalek, Joanne Powell, Bronwyn Nutley (Tara McMinn 83), Amber Neilson, Jodie Randall, Alison Forman, Shelley Youman, Sunni Hughes, Kristy Palozzi (Hayley Crawford 64), Tracey Baker, Cheryl Salisbury.

In other games SASI Pirates beat Vic Vision 2-0, while the NSW Sapphires had a Kelly Golebiowski goal to thank in their 1-0 win over QAS.



Matilda star Sarah Cooper against Ghana in the opening game of Women's World Cup 99. Cooper is now off to play in a lucrative tournament in the US.

NSL ROUND ONE: OUR ASSESSMENT

By Aidan Ormond

Fireworks, promotional girls, a Spanish band, jumping castles, merry-go-rounds, cheerleaders and a Ricky Martin show.

And Spirit and Glory did not play at home this weekend!

You can't fault some of our clubs for trying to jazz up their match day with this sort of entertainment last weekend to kick-off the NSL for this, the final season start of this century.

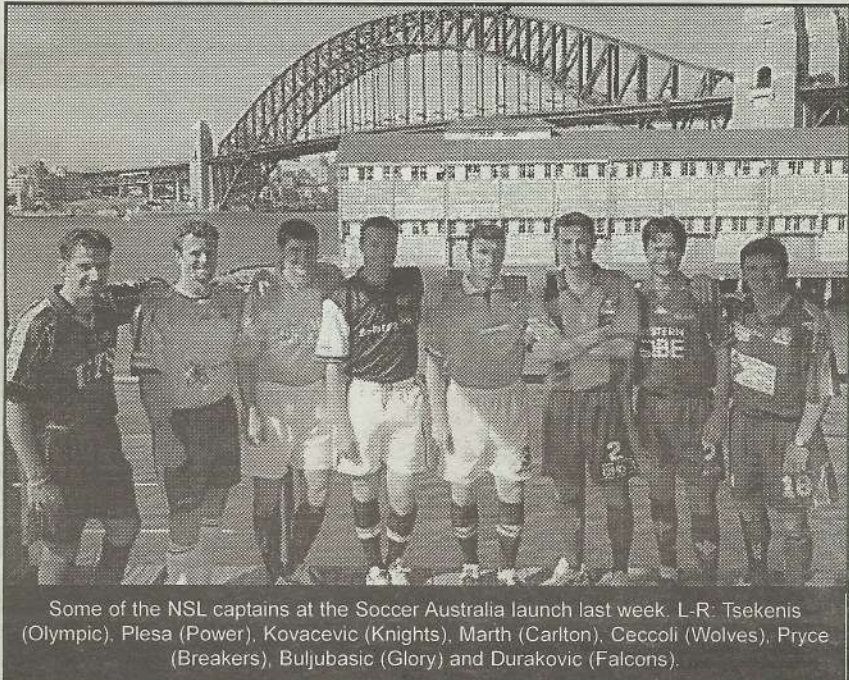
Of course the purists will say that entertaining football is what it's all

Special mention, however, must be made of two clubs that are not the most glamorous in the NSL: Canberra and Melbourne Knights.

On Sunday the Knights pulled five thousand to their ground. A new and very enthusiastic young board saw the club put on a number of match day promotional ideas, the likes of which have never been seen at their renovated ground.

They have a mountain to climb in terms of attracting fans, but they aren't giving up.

And Canberra Cosmos attracted



Some of the NSL captains at the Soccer Australia launch last week. L-R: Tsekenis (Olympic), Plesa (Power), Kovacevic (Knights), Marth (Carlton), Ceccoli (Wolves), Pryce (Breakers), Buljbasic (Glory) and Durakovic (Falcons).

about, but a little icing on the cake never hurt.

Sadly, if one looked at the stats on the weekend, the crowds at both Parramatta and Auckland were well down on predictions.

Parramatta, as we know, was hit by a thunderstorm some three hours before kick-off. It was so severe it caused flooding in the nearby suburb of Granville.

Of course we will never know how many fans were either turned off by the rain, or were unable to get to the ground as a result, but a conservative figure of 2-3,000 would suggest that there is a support of somewhere between 10,000 to 13,000 for Sydney's new club.

And with a side that is perfectly capable of doing well this year, the higher end of the scale can be expected from the team in the Brazil kit.

Auckland however is a real worry. When the figure came through, it was greeted with some disappointment.

Some will say that the short lead-in time (FIFA accepted them only two months ago) is part of the reason, and this is understandable to a degree.

Further, there were some major sporting contests occupying sports fans in New Zealand (World Netball Championships was one).

But a figure much higher was nevertheless expected. Even Kingz Chairman Brian Turner expected about 4,000 more, speaking to Jeremy Ruane from New Zealand's soccer media, he said he was happy but would have simply liked more.

So much for the anticipated 20,000 plus. Perhaps they will build their support as the administration, which still does not have a media contact person, beds itself in.

over 4,000 for their first game - a superb 3-0 win over Force - on a night when the weather was not exactly conducive to going out (and we know how cold it gets in Canberra).

Well done to the players at the club (see page four) who have taken over the promotions and marketing of the club. The potential is huge in the ACT.

On the park and the standout performances (Spirit v Sydney United was after press) came from Carlton and Cosmos. Carlton's potentially tricky first opponent, the Football Kingz, had never played in Australia.

Carlton overcame their opponents with a measured professionalism that singles them out as a real threat - their UK pros like McPherson, Slater and Conroy, allied with the Brazilian brilliance of striker Alex Moreira and the all-action Andrew Marth, look to have combined exceedingly well. They deserve 10,000 this Friday night against Gippsland at Olympic Park.

And the Cosmos' win - albeit against the always slow starting Adelaide Force - was a triumph of mental strength. For so many years they simply did not believe in themselves. This is another club that has the potential to pull much bigger crowds than just 4,000.

And with the always-organised Tom Sermanni pulling the strings, together with experienced players like Socceroo Robbie Hooker and Jason Polak, plus exciting youngsters like ex-Spirit apprentice Danny Watkins, Ivo De Jesus and Alex Castro, we may be seeing the rebirth of Canberra Soccer.

Then again, as Tom Sermanni said on Sunday, it's just round one.



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**THE
SPIRIT
IS
BACK
IN
TOWN
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